THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO

JAZZ GUITAR

Step-by-step instructions with audio & guitar tabs



JAZZGUITAR.BE

Contents

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Foreword

Welcome to **The Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar**, great to have you here!



Learning how to play jazz guitar means working on tunes, learning vocabulary, and studying techniques such as chords, scales and arpeggios.

It also means working on time, groove, rhythm, ear training, and other essential performance skills.

While these skills and techniques are essential to learning to play jazz guitar, they can be intimidating or overwhelming to study on your own.

This is where *The Beginner's Guide to Jazz Guitar* comes in...

This book is designed to introduce you to all of the essential elements needed to learn to play over your favorite jazz standards with confidence.

So, enjoy this material, explore the various elements that make up jazz guitar performance, and have fun with these exercises in the woodshed!

Cheers,
Dirk & Matt

> **About the audio in this eBook**: if you are connected to the internet while working in your ebook, all you have to do is click the link of each audio example to play it. If you are not connected, you'll have to download the audio files first here.

Chapter 1 - Jazz Guitar Chords

The most important element of learning and playing jazz guitar is comping – playing chords behind melodies and soloists in a group setting.

While soloing is what most of us want to spend our time on in the practice room, on the bandstand guitarists spend the majority of the time playing chords. Because of this, it's essential to study jazz chords, progressions, and comping phrases in the woodshed.

Having a strong command of chords and comping allows you to fully participate on any jam or gig as a jazz guitarist.

The material in this chapter sets you on that pathway in the practice room. By studying this material, you build a harmonic foundation that brings authentic jazz comping skills and vocabulary to your playing.

So, grab your guitar, turn up your favorite amp, and dig into these essential jazz chords and harmonic concepts.

> *"I don't know that many chords. I'd be loaded if I knew that many. But that's not my aim. My aim is to move from one vein to the other without any trouble. The biggest thing to me is keeping a feeling, regardless what you play. So many cats lose their feeling at various times, not through the whole tune, but at various times, and it causes them to have to build up and drop down, and you can feel it."* - Wes Montgomery

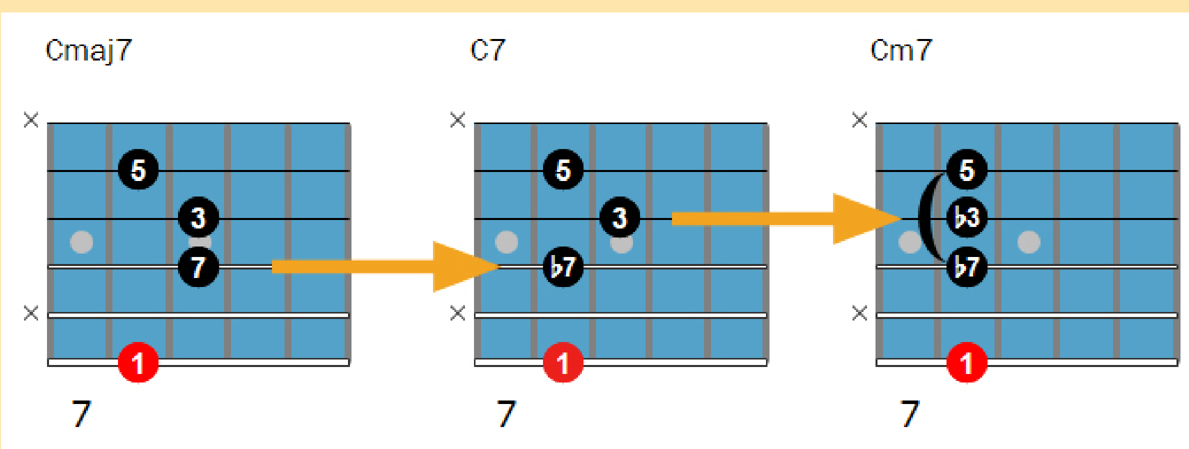
17 Essential Jazz Guitar Chords For Beginners

The 17 chord shapes shown on the following pages are essential knowledge for every beginning jazz guitarist to get started. The chords you'll learn here are maj7, dominant 7, minor 7, half diminished 7 and diminished 7.

A **red dot** ❶ represents the root (aka 1 or bass note) of the chord. The root is the note that gives the chord the first part of its name (C or A for example). On this chart, all bass notes are C. By moving the chord shapes up or down the guitar neck you get other chords of the same type (you'll learn how a bit further, in the chapter about transposing chords).

The **numbers** (❸❺❼) inside the note markers are chord tones. These chord tones give the chord the second part of its name (maj7 or min7 for example). If this is new to you, you should make it easier on yourself and learn basic chord theory.

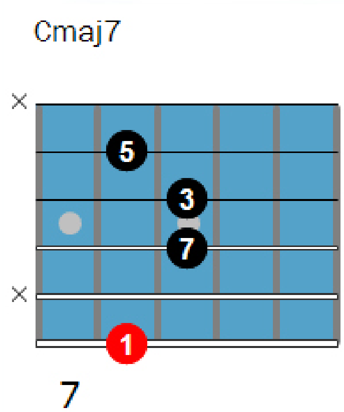
Notice how each chord only changes one note to the next. This can help you memorize the chords, and relate them to one another. For example: Maj7 and 7th only have one note difference, as well as 7th and m7:

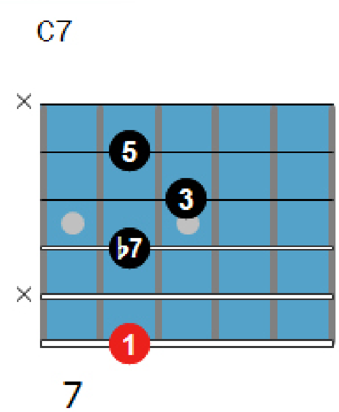


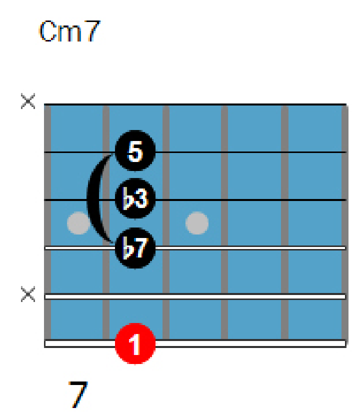
Chords with the Root on String 6

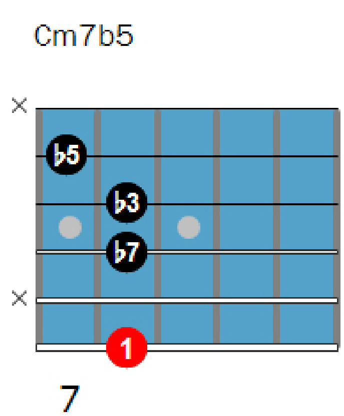
The following 5 chords have their **bass note** on the lowest string (the low E string). The strings marked with an x are not played. The **bass note** is played with the thumb of the right hand, the **other chord tones** are simultaneously played with fingers 1, 2 and 3 (index, middle finger and ring finger).

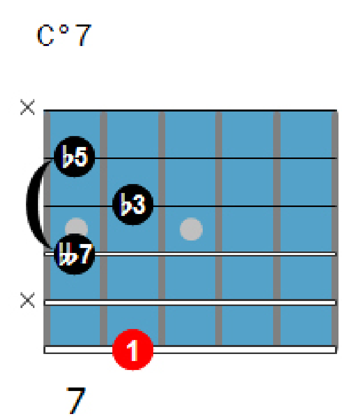
Learn to play these 5 chords so that all chord tones ring freely. Further in this chapter you'll learn how you can practice these chords further.







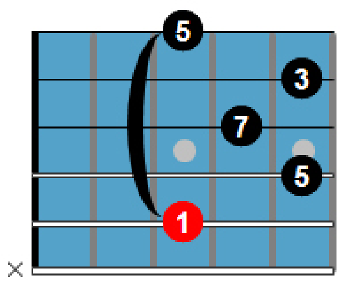




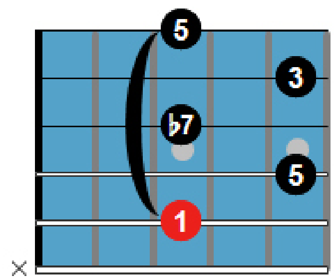
Chords with the Root on String 5

The following chords have their **bass note** on the 5th string (the A string).

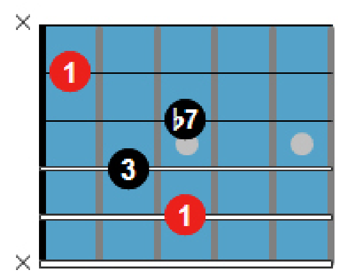
Cmaj7



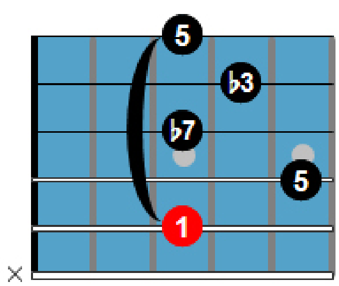
C7



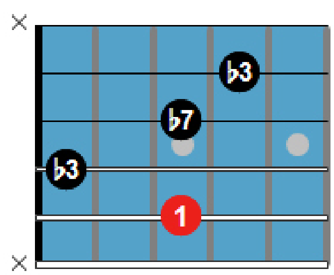
C7



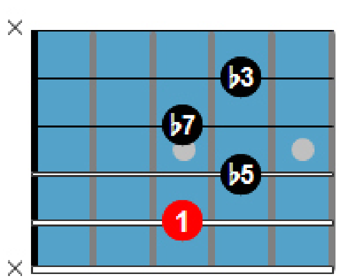
Cm7



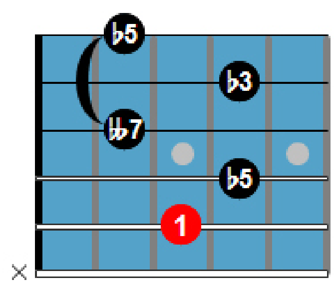
Cm7



Cm7b5



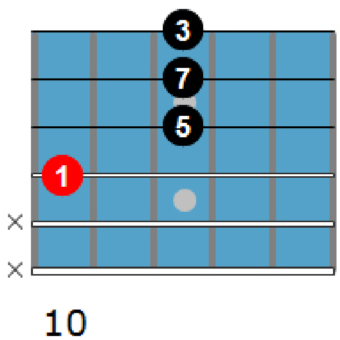
C°7



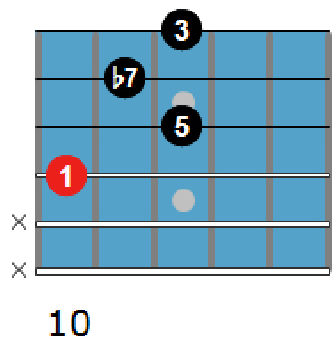
Chords with the Root on String 4

The following chords are chords with the **root** on the 4th string (the D string).

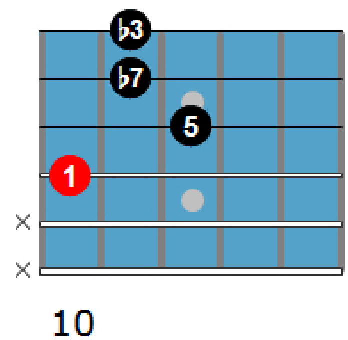
Cmaj7



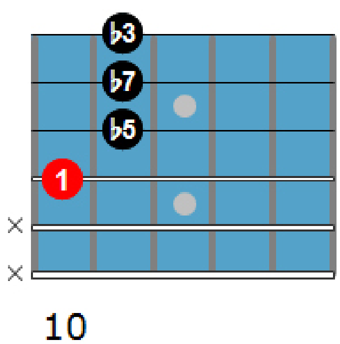
C7



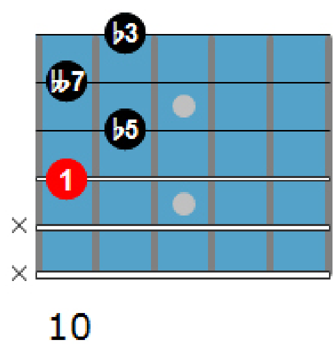
Cm7



Cm7b5



C°7



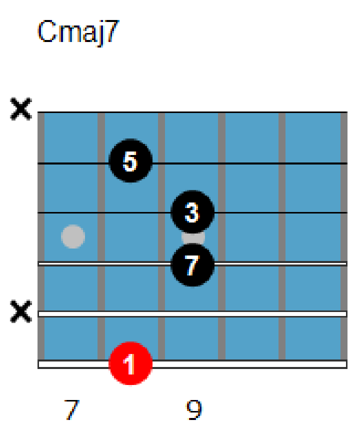
How to Transpose Guitar Chords

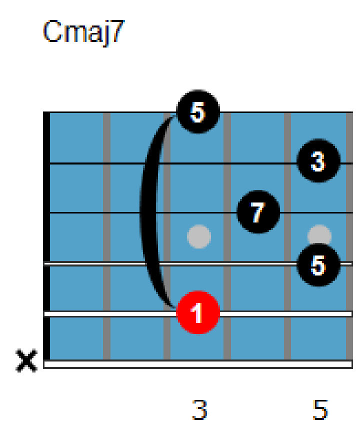
Learning chord shapes is one part of jazz comping, the other is begin able to play those shapes in **any key**. When doing so, you don't have to learn new chords, you just have to recognize where the root of the chord is and move it to the note you need.

To begin, here are two **Cmaj7** chord shapes with the root highlighted in red. Whatever fret that **red note** is on is the root of the chord you're playing.

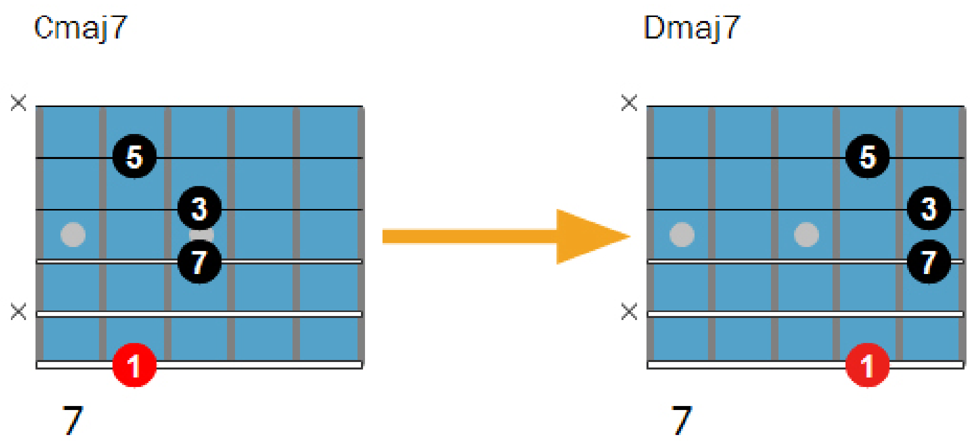
Play these **two chord shapes** and focus on seeing that root note as the name of the chord you're on. You can even say the root and/or chord name as you play it, such as "C" or "Cmaj7".

This sets you up to **transpose chords** in the next example:

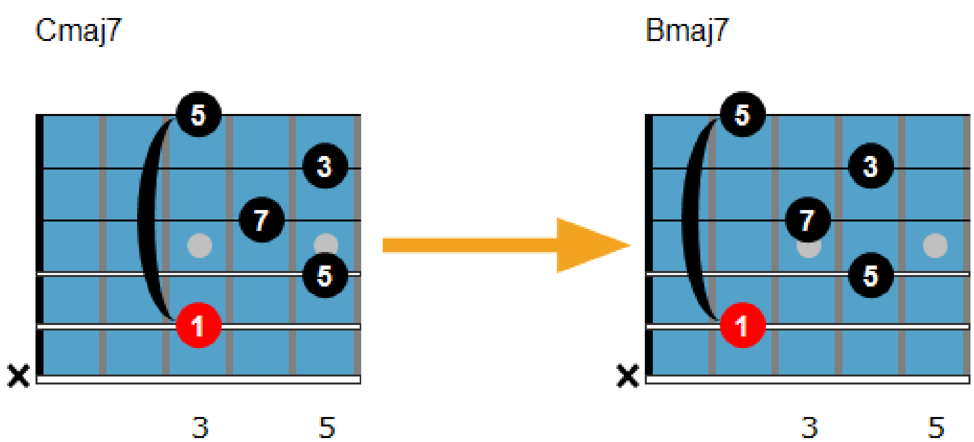




You can now take those Cmaj7 chords and play them in **different keys**. In this example we'll transpose the Cmaj7 to Dmaj7 by moving the chord shape of the Cmaj7 2 frets higher:



In the next example we'll transpose the second voicing of the **Cmaj7 to Bmaj7** by moving the chord shape of the Cmaj7 1 fret lower:



After you can transpose these chords, repeat the exercise with 7th, m7b5, and any other jazz chords you're studying.

> Remember: the **red note** (in this case the lowest note), tells you what the name of the chord is when played on the guitar.

Your First Jazz Chord Progression

With chords under your fingers, you're ready to learn your first jazz chord progression: **ii V I vi (i**f you're not sure what these Roman numerals mean, click here to learn more about them in the appendix of this ebook).

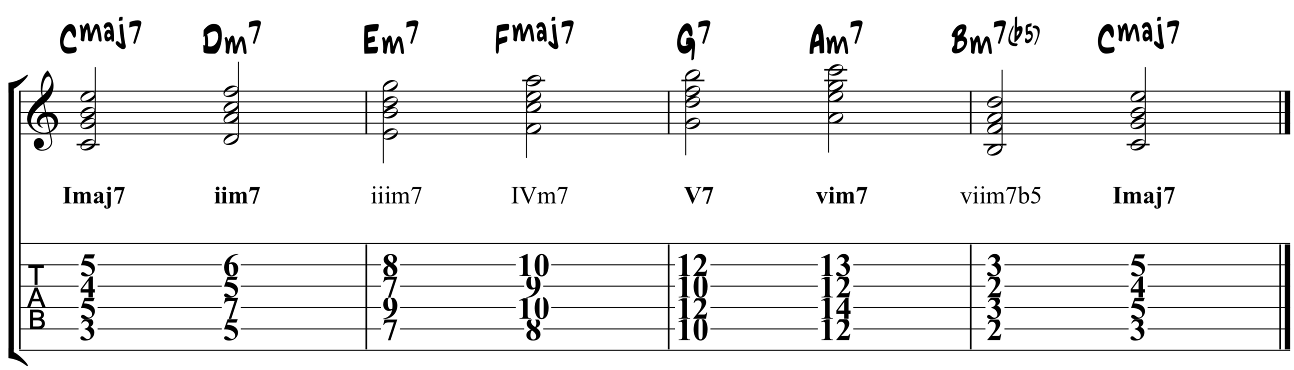
These chords, or variations of these chords, are found in countless **jazz standards** and are essential knowledge for anyone learning jazz guitar.

The progression is taken from the major scale, where four of the seven chords are extracted and arranged to form this progression.

Here are the chords in the key of **C major**, with the ii V I vi chords in bold so you can see where they lay in the key.

Audio Example 1

Click here to play audio example 1

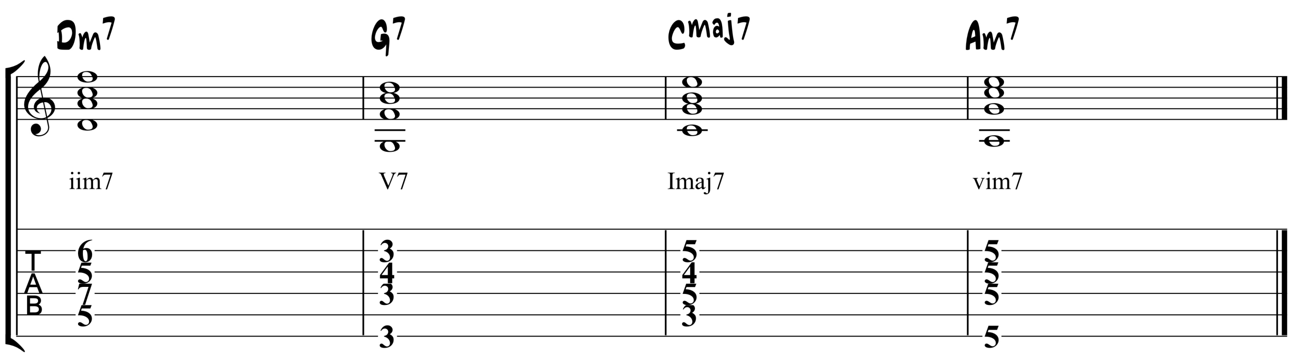


To build the **ii V I vi** chord progression, you take those highlighted chords from the previous example and play this in them in the following order:

Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	Am7
ii	V	I	vi

Audio Example 2

Click here to play audio example 2



Work these shapes with a **plain rhythm** at first, and then add in rhythms as you move to the next section in this chapter.

For a further challenge, transpose these chords to other keys. Here are four keys/progressions to get you started. **Can you play these shapes?**

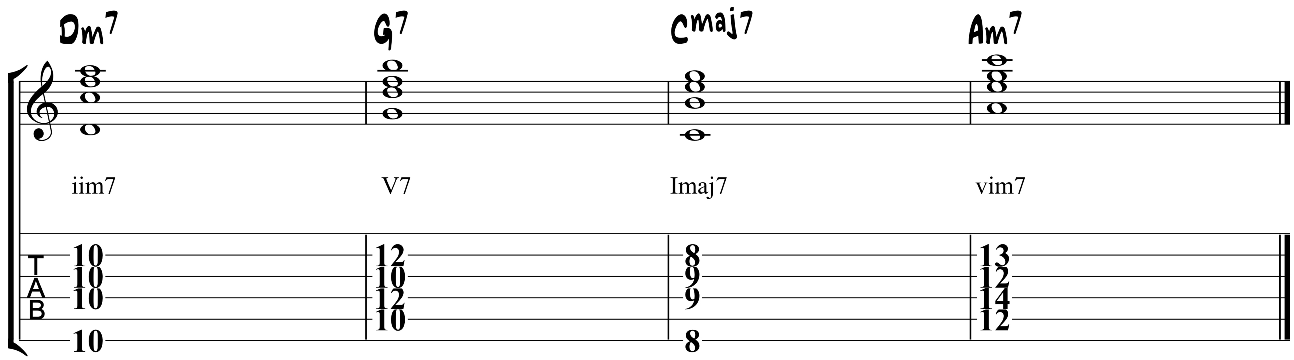
- Am7 – D7 – Gmaj7 – Em7
- Em7 – A7 – Dmaj7 – Bm7
- Cm7 – F7 – Bbmaj7 – Gm7
- Gm7 – C7 – Fmaj7 – Dm7

Here are the same chords, but moved to **another position** on the fretboard.

After you can play these shapes, **move between** this and the previous example as you take these essential chords around the fretboard.

Audio Example 3

Click here to play audio example 3



"Sometimes you have to play a long time to be able to play like yourself." - Miles Davis

Essential Jazz Comping Rhythms

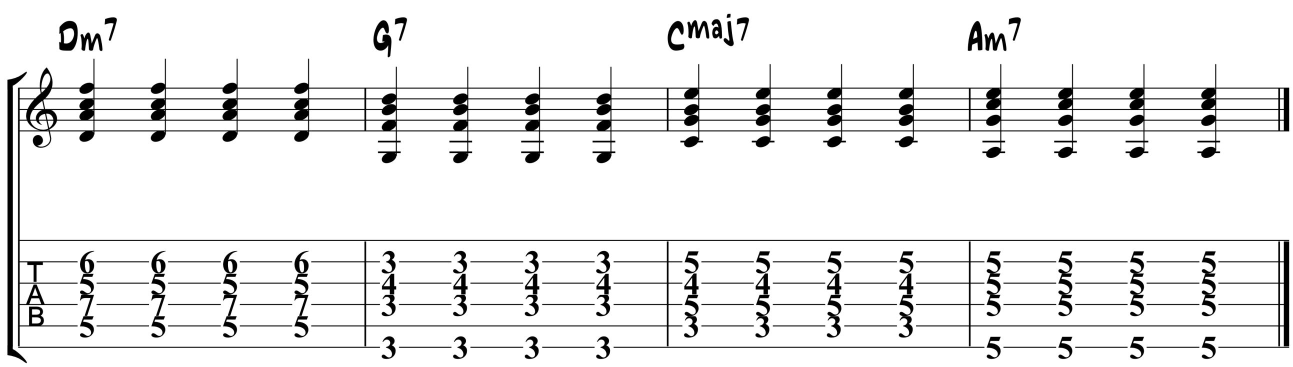
Now that you know a **jazz chord progression,** you can study some classic jazz rhythms with those same chords.

The first rhythm (steady quarter notes aka four to the bar), is often called the **Freddie Green rhythm**, named after Count Basie's guitarist. When playing this rhythm, accenting the **2nd and 4th notes** of each bar gives you a swing feel that emulates Green's driving pulse.



Audio Example 4

Click here to play audio example 4

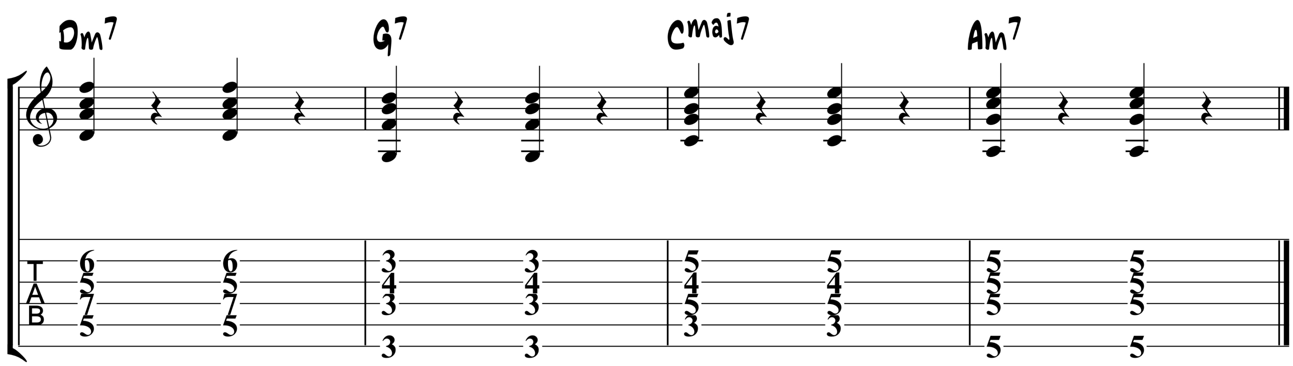


The second rhythm places chords on **beats 1 and 3** of each bar, as you remove chords from beats 2 and 4 of the previous rhythm example.

Go slow, count, and make sure you cut the chords off so they don't ring over on beats 2 and 4, which is important to maintaining the **swing feel** with this rhythm.

Audio Example 5

Click here to play audio example 5

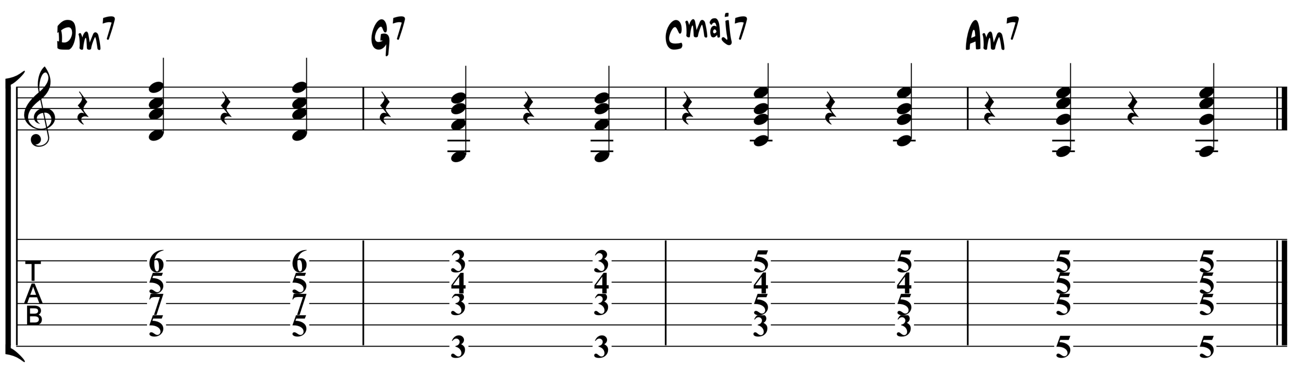


You now take the first and third beats out of each bar as you play chords on **beats 2 and 4** in each measure.

When doing so, you line up with the **hi-hat** on the drum kit, bringing a heavier swing to your comping in the process.

Audio Example 6

Click here to play audio example 6



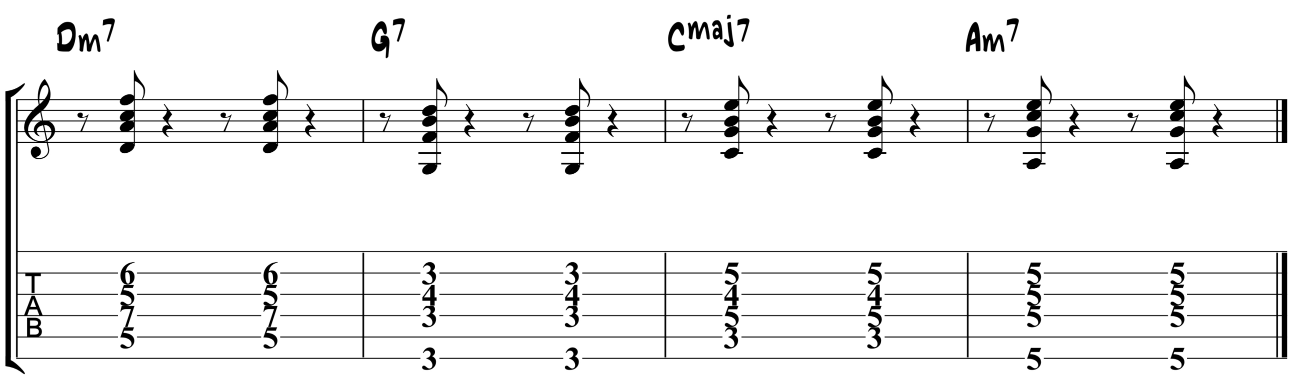
You now explore a syncopated rhythm by playing chords on the **& of 1 and 3** in each bar.

> ***Syncopation** is a musical term which refers to playing on the **up-beat**. The up-beat occurs between down-beats. If you count:*
>
> *1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &*
>
> *The numbers are the down-beats and the '&'s' are on the up-beats.*

Though it sounds cool, it's hard to play syncopated rhythms and not **rush the time.** Because of this, work with a **metronome** and go slow until you're ready to speed this pattern.

Audio Example 7

Click here to play audio example 7

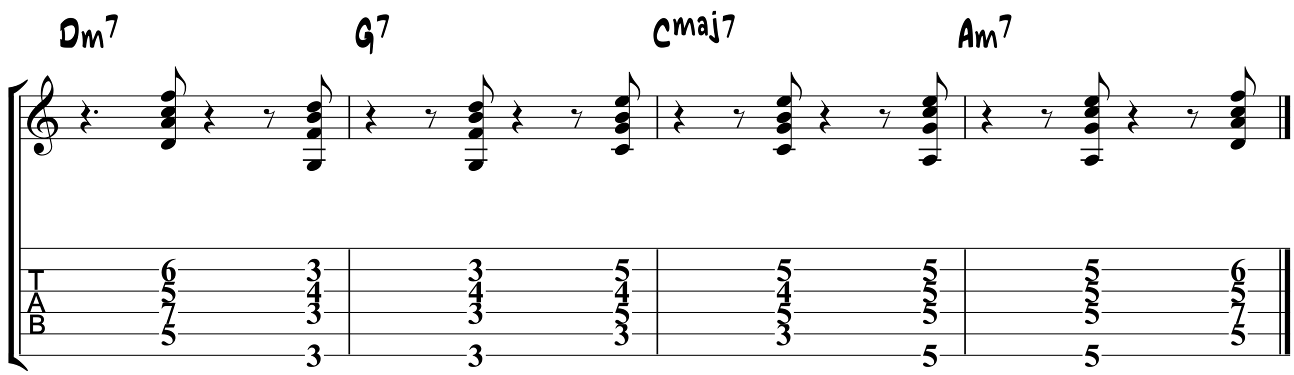


The next rhythm places chords on the **& of 2 and 4** in each bar. This technique is called "**anticipation**," and is an essential jazz rhythmic concept.

> Anticipation is placing the chord from the next bar on the & of 4 in the bar you're on (such as the G7 on the & of 4 in bar 1).

Audio Example 8

Click here to play audio example 8



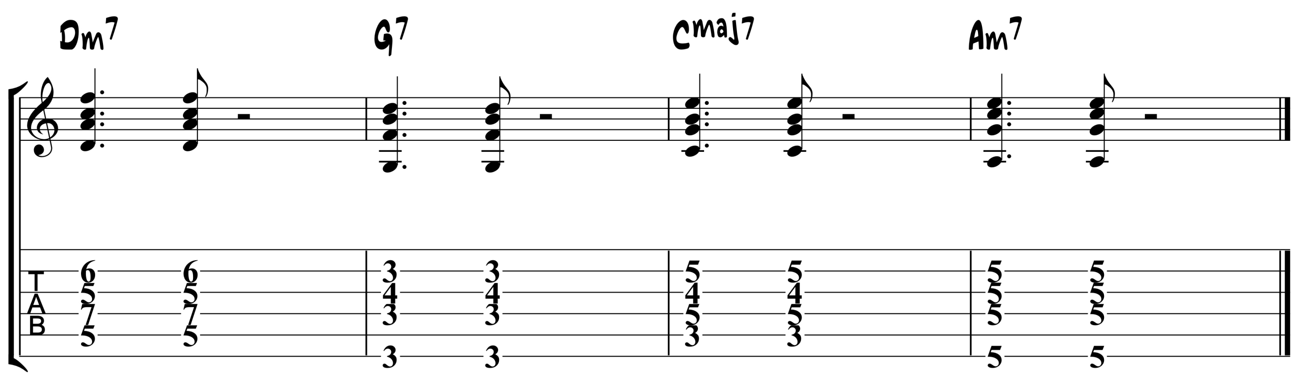
The final rhythm is called the **Charleston**, as it's named after the famous dance from the early 1900s.

In this **rhythm**, you play a chord on beat one of each bar, followed by a chord on the & of 2 in each bar.

Count as you learn this rhythm and work with a **slow metronome** until it's comfortable.

Audio Example 9

Click here to play audio example 9



Autumn Leaves Comping Study

To finalize this chapter about chords, you'll learn a chord study that uses **shapes** and rhythms from this section.

Go slow, learn each **four-bar phrase** one at a time, and then put everything together from there as you learn the whole tune.

After you can play these chords and rhythms, **change the rhythms**, as you expand this exercise in the woodshed.

Here's a **backing track** that you can use to practice this chord study.

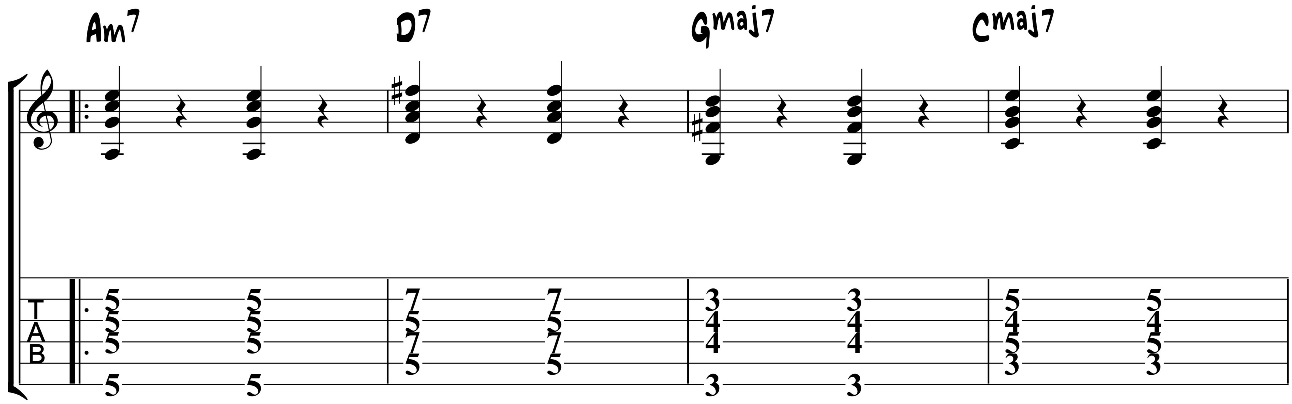
Backing Track 1

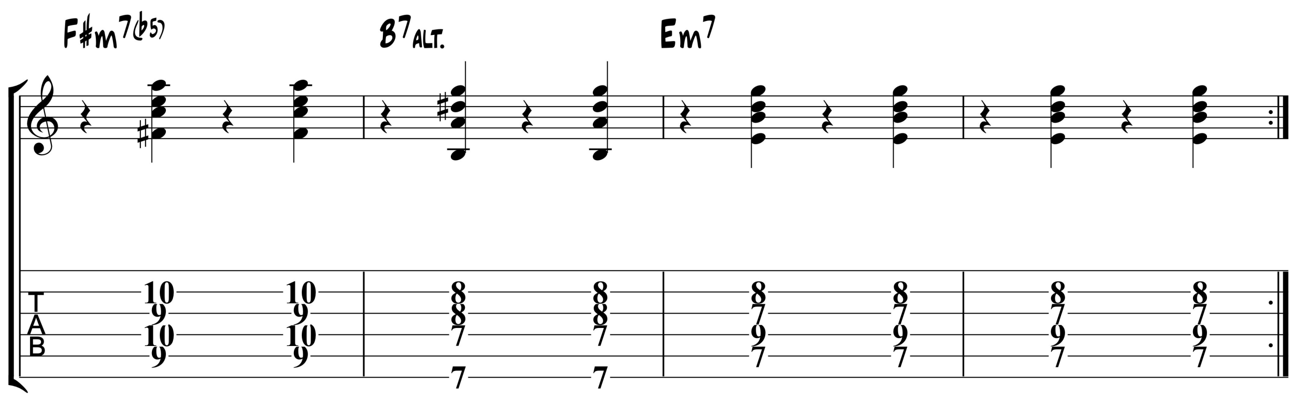
Click here to play backing track 1

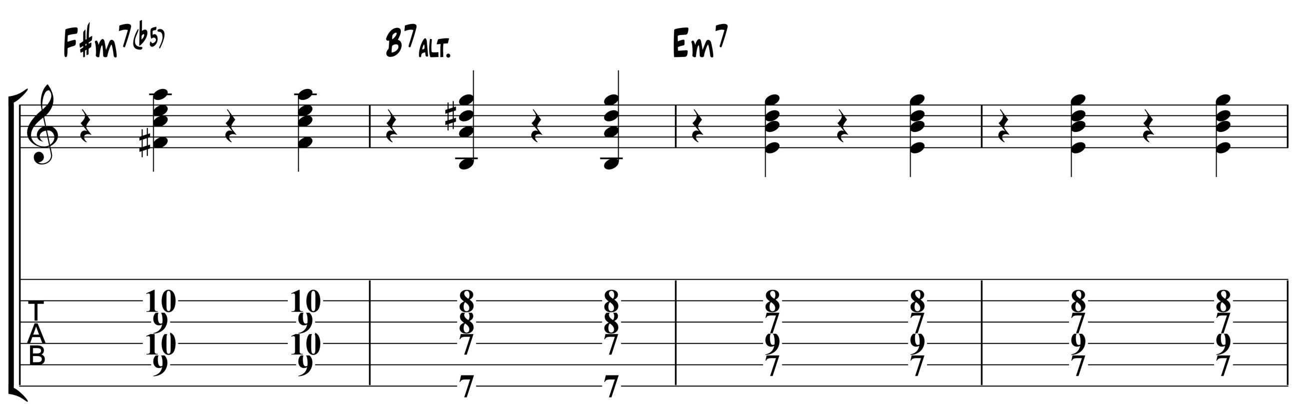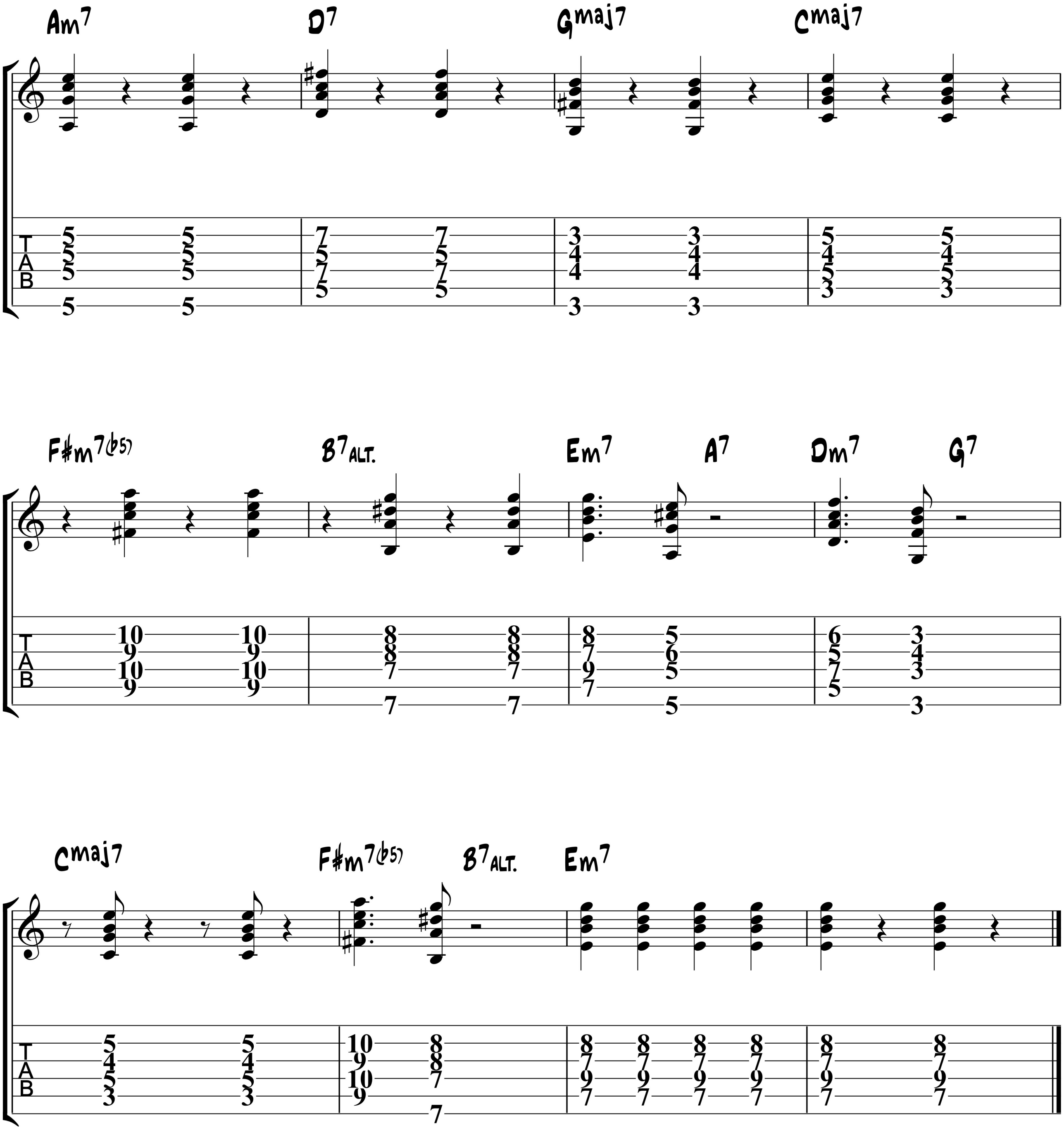


Audio Example 10

Click here to play audio example 10



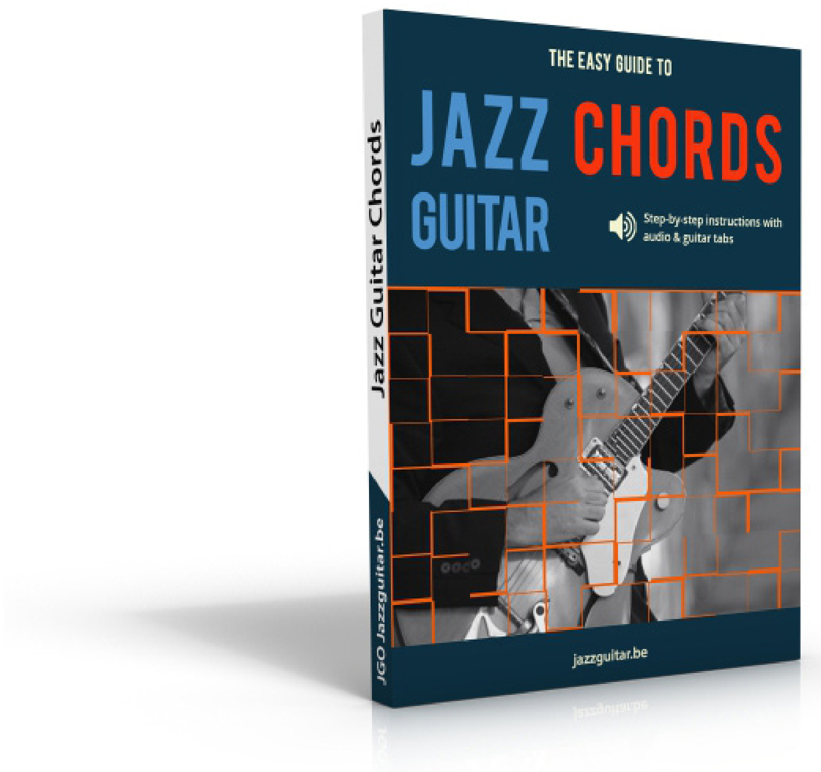





Am7 D7 Gmaj7 Cmaj7
F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7 A7 Dm7 G7
Cmaj7 F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7
TAB

The Easy Guide To Jazz Guitar Chords eBook

Now you have learned the basics of jazz guitar chords. If you want to progress and learn more about how chords are used in jazz, check out our step-by-step eBook The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Chords.



Jazz guitarists love to play chords. They sound cool on the instrument, are full of colorful extensions, and **it's most of what you** do when playing in a jazz combo.

Covering **every essential jazz guitar chord type**, in both technical and musical situations, the material in this eBook will take you from day 1 of jazz guitar to comping over standards in no time.

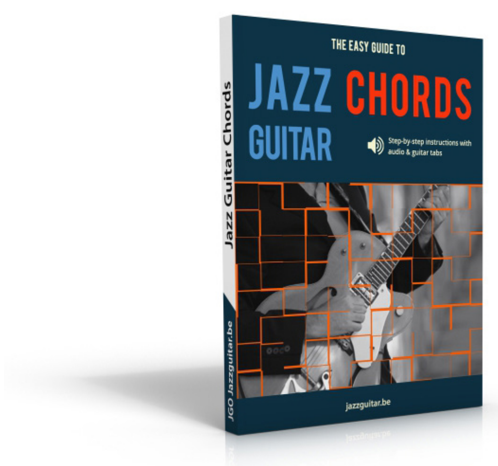
When you buy *The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Chords*, you get:

- 330 pages of text, musical examples, and backing tracks for efficient at home study.
- 226 audio examples with guitar tabs/notation or chord diagrams.
- Practical, musical examples for each chord concept presented in the book.
- 28 Slow and fast backing tracks for each chord progression and standard studied in the eBook.
- A chord dictionary with bonus harmonic exercises to take your chord playing to the next level.
- Picking hand variations and exercises to develop both hands in the practice room.

Timothy ★★★★★

I have several of Matt and Dirk's books and what I appreciate about all of them is that everything I need is right in front of me; audio tracks, tab and written content. This kind of organized presentation is invaluable. Jazz guitar is a very complex subject and these books are an excellent roadmap....all I need to do is practice!

Click Here to download your copy of *The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Chords*.



Chapter 2 - Playing Jazz Standards

Besides learning techniques like scales, chords, and arpeggios, learning jazz standards is essential for every jazz guitarist. These are the songs that you use to communicate with other musicians, and they get you playing music rather than just concepts.

To begin this section, we'll listen to 10 beginner standards. After that you'll learn how to play the melody and chord melody to Autumn Leaves.

10 Beginner Jazz Standards

To begin, here are **10 essential tunes** for beginning jazz guitarists to know.

When learning these songs, you want to learn the melody, chords, and soloing, so you can function in a jam situation.

Don't worry about learning all 10 at once, it's better to have one that you can jam with other people, rather than have parts of several tunes under your fingers.

Lastly, you can learn these songs from a **Real Book**, but make sure to listen to recorded versions by famous jazz musicians of these same songs.

This introduces these songs and their **interpretation** to your ears, making it easier to learn when you take the chords, melody, and soloing to the fretboard.

Birks' Works (Dizzy Gillespie)



Built with an AAB melodic structure, Birks' Works is one of the most played and easily recognizable minor blues tunes in the jazz repertoire. Written and originally recorded by **Dizzy Gillespie**, this tune can be played in any key on any given gig or jam session, as it has an easily transposable melody.

As with any minor blues head, the turnaround for Birks' Works has a few **common variations** that you will run into on a jam session. These variations include bVI-V-I, ii-V-I, or even biii-bVI/ii V/I.

Whichever variations you encounter, one thing's for sure, Birks' Works is an essential minor blues tune for any jazz guitarist to learn and call on jam sessions.

Mr. P.C. (John Coltrane)



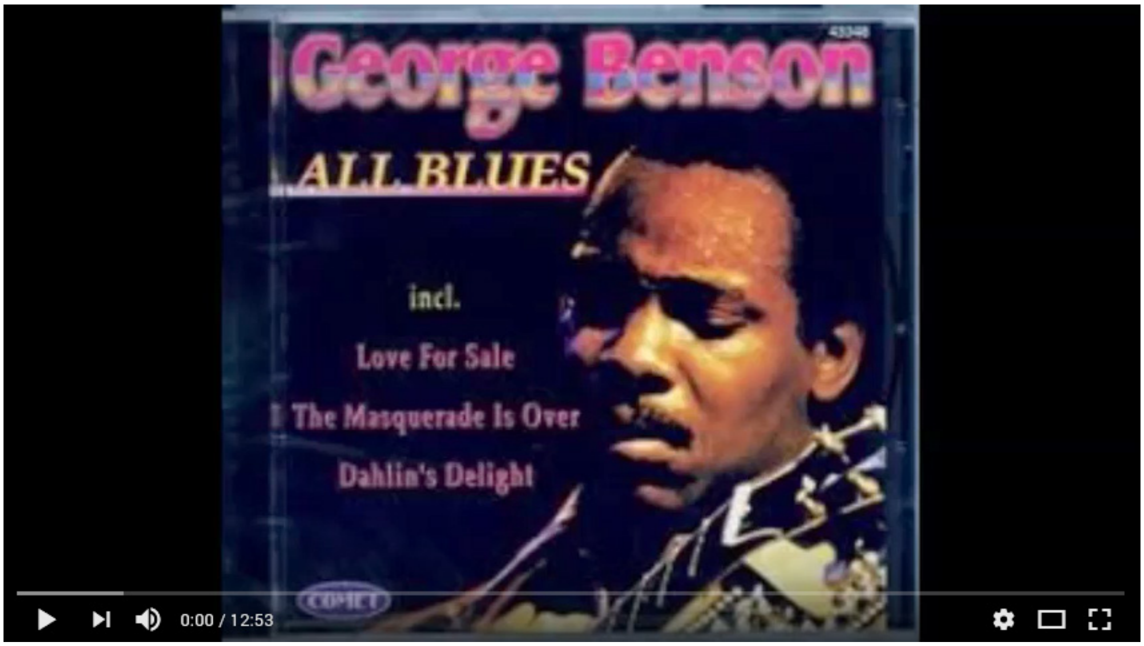
Named after Coltrane's bassist **Paul Chambers**, Mr. P.C. is a commonly called jam session and gig minor blues tune in the key of C minor, at least normally. Because the tune is a riff based tune, where the original lick is first played in the tonic key and then over the ivm7 chord, Mr. P.C. is often called in different keys.

Though the progression is straightforward, and the melody isn't too difficult to get under your fingers, the tempo is usually a challenge with this tune. **Often played at 200 or more bpm**, even reaching close to 300 by some players, this tune can challenge your chops and focus as you burn over a fast-paced minor blues tune.

Make sure to **memorize** these melodies, even just one if that's all you have time for right now, so that you can recall that melody on the spot in a jam session.

Because each melody fits over a minor jazz blues form, start by **listening** to each tune and then start with the one that attracts your attention the most.

All Blues (Miles Davis)



You know that learning the blues is important to learn jazz, but it's also important to learn a blues with a twist, such as the Miles Davis tune All Blues.

This tune features an **interesting chord progression**, with the bVII7 chord used in the last turnaround.

As well, All Blues is played in **6/8 time** (sometimes written in 3/4 or 6/4 time depending on the lead sheet).

Because of this, make sure you jam along with the original recording to ensure that you're lining up the groove correctly with the intended rhythmic feel.

All Blues is a tough blues tune to play, but it's a fun challenge that will entertain you and enrich your playing over a non-standard blues form.

Summertime (George Gershwin)



One of the **most popular jazz songs** of all time, Summertime has a memorable melody that many players have heard prior to studying jazz.

It also acts as a nice introduction to **common minor key progressions**, such as ii V I in minor and the ii V I to the ivm7 chord, both found in this tune.

You also work on mixing tonic minor and major sounds in the second half of the tune, another common jazz harmonic technique.

Lastly, for beginner jazz guitarists, you can use the minor pentatonic or minor blues scale to solo over this entire progression. This makes it a great “bridge” tune for those coming from a rock and blues background and who are now studying jazz in their practice routine.

Click here to learn a chord study over Summertime

Maiden Voyage (Herbie Hancock)



As you work on **changing keys** in your playing (a tough step for any beginner jazz guitarist), Maiden Voyage is a great tune to work on.

It also contains a fun and challenging **rhythmic pattern** to get down, and 7sus chords or slash chords (depending on the lead sheet you use).

Either way, the chords are **modal** in nature, and move around to four different keys as you navigate this 32-bar form.

A fun study in modal jazz, Dorian modes, rhythmic control, and key changes that challenges you in the woodshed and adds to your jam session set list.

Click here to learn a chord study over Maiden Voyage

Watermelon Man (Herbie Hancock)



A **16-bar blues**, Watermelon Man will challenge your ability to keep track of the progression as you solo over a I-IV-V progression.

For an added challenge in the woodshed, learn the **piano riff** that Herbie made famous with this song.

Piano riffs don't always sit well on guitar, but this line sits nicely on the guitar, and allows you to jam the tune with an authentic sound in jam sessions.

The chords are fairly easy to navigate, compared to other jazz tunes in the repertoire, but the form and groove are engaging and challenging for beginners.

Click here to learn a chord melody version of Watermelon Man

Take The A Train (Billy Strayhorn)



Besides being a classic vocal and instrumental jazz track, Take the A Train introduces you to **essential chords and soloing concepts** on guitar.

There's the **II7 chord** (D7 in the key of C major), that appears in the first half of each A section, and the bridge moves to the IV chord.

Both of these harmonic concepts are found in countless other tunes, so learning A Train sets you up to nail other tunes in your playing as well.

The melody is mostly based on chord tones and arpeggio shapes, providing you ideas tied to the melody when it comes time to solo.

It's also played at a wide variety of tempos, providing unique challenges as you explore various grooves and bpm's with this tune in the woodshed.

Click here to learn a chord study over Take the A Train

Satin Doll (Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn)



One of the **most popular jam session tunes**, Satin Doll provides ii V progressions to navigate when soloing over these fun changes.

Moving in non-traditional ways, these **ii V progressions** move quickly so require a solid knowledge of ii V material to outline the progression.

As well as challenging your soloing chops, this tune is ripe for a chord melody arrangement as the melody sits well on the fretboard below chord shapes.

If you're looking for inspiration, the Wes Montgomery version of this song is essential listening for any jazz guitarist.

Click here to learn a chord melody version of Satin Doll

Blue Bossa (Kenny Dorham)



The only bossa tune on this list, Blue Bossa introduces you to **Brazilian jazz comping** and rhythmic concepts on guitar.

As well, there's a tricky **key change** in the middle of the tune, where it shifts from Cm to Db major, then back again for the final four bars.

Because it's a bossa groove, you need to spend time on syncopation in both your soloing and comping.

Working on syncopation in your chords and lines not only prepares you to jam this tune, it prepares you for many other jazz jam situations as well.

Although Blue Bossa wasn't written by a Brazilian, but it's one of the most commonly jammed bossa tunes in the jazz catalogue. Therefore it's an essential tune to have under your fingers.

Click here to learn the chords of Blue Bossa

Autumn Leaves (Joseph Kosma)



A definite **must-know standard**, Autumn Leaves is one of the most commonly called tunes at jazz jam sessions.

It can be played in **Em or Gm**, and therefore is an introduction to tunes that are commonly played in more than one key, forcing you to learn it in both keys.

There are also major ii V I's and minor ii V I's to navigate in your comping and soloing, and the melody line is ripe for a chord melody arrangement.

Besides all of this technique material, Autumn Leaves is just a fun tune to play.

It's challenging, can be played at many different tempos, and sounds great in many ensemble settings.

Because of this, Autumn Leaves should be one of the first jazz songs that you learn and study in the practice room.

Autumn Leaves Melody

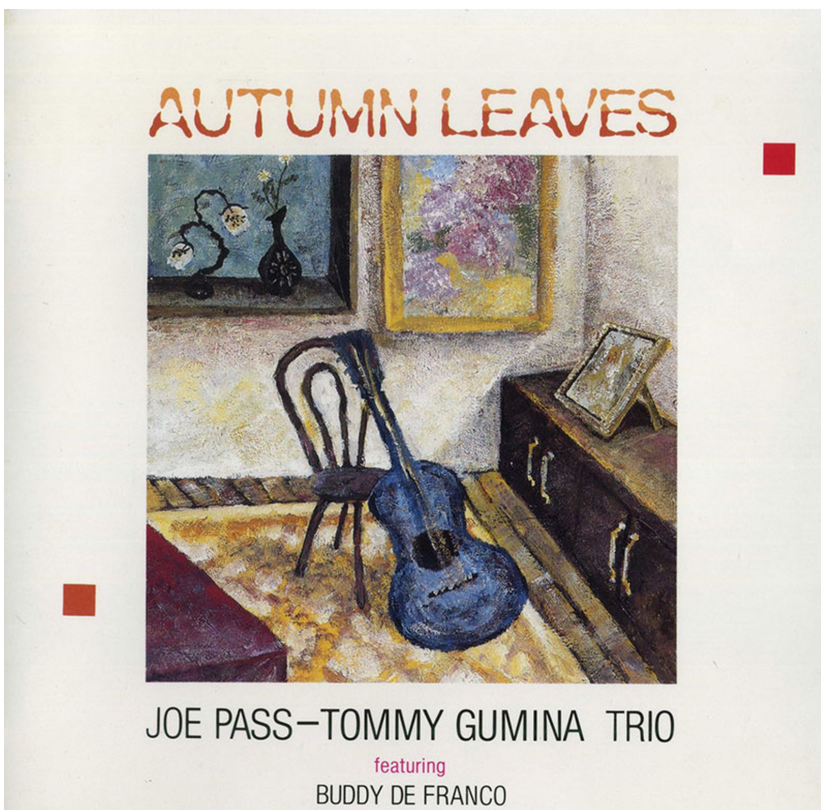
To get you started with these songs, here is the **melody** to Autumn Leaves.

Learn the melody as written, playing it along with the **audio example**.

From there, play it along with the **backing track** and you work on memorizing this important jazz standard.
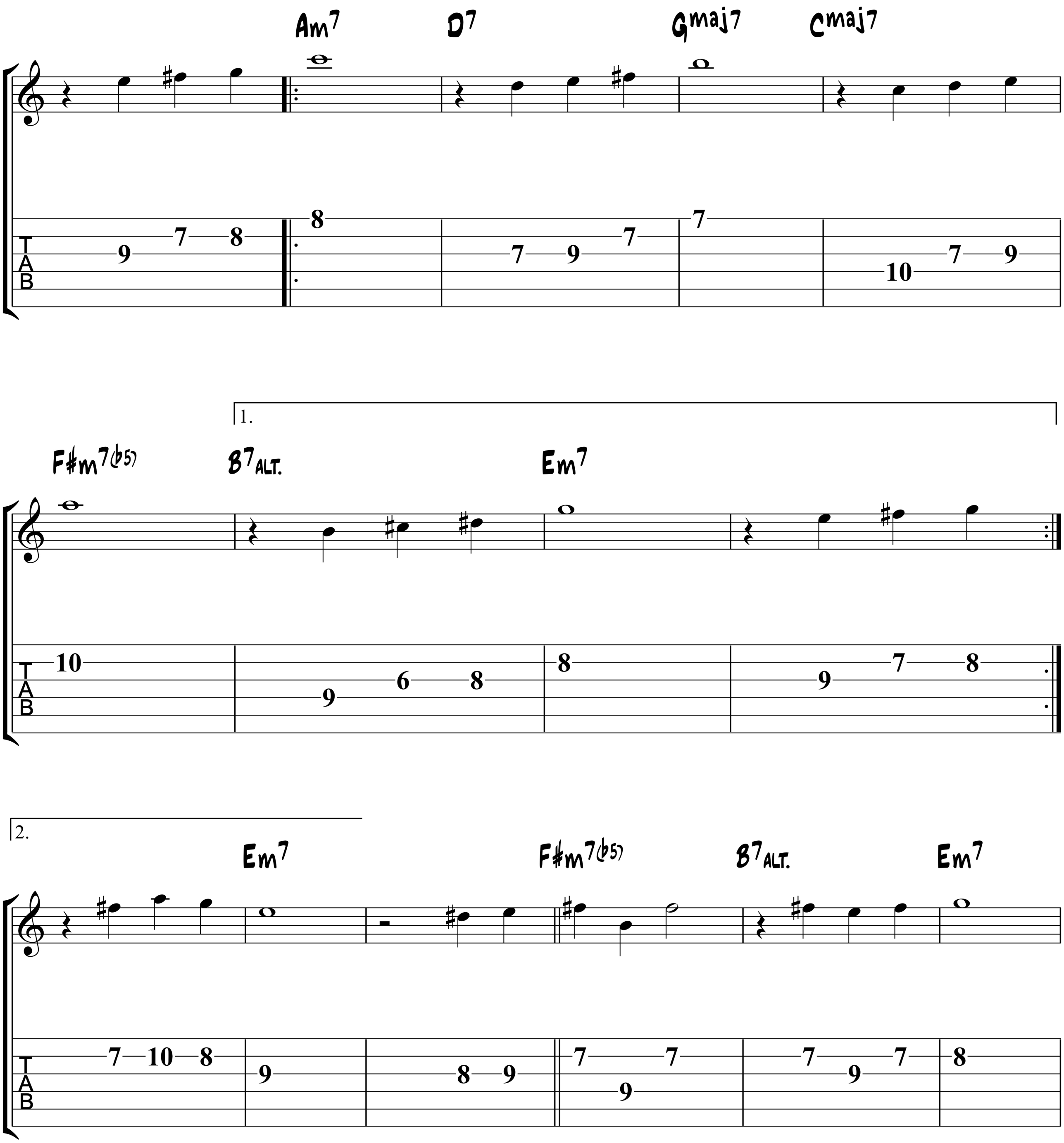
Backing Track 2
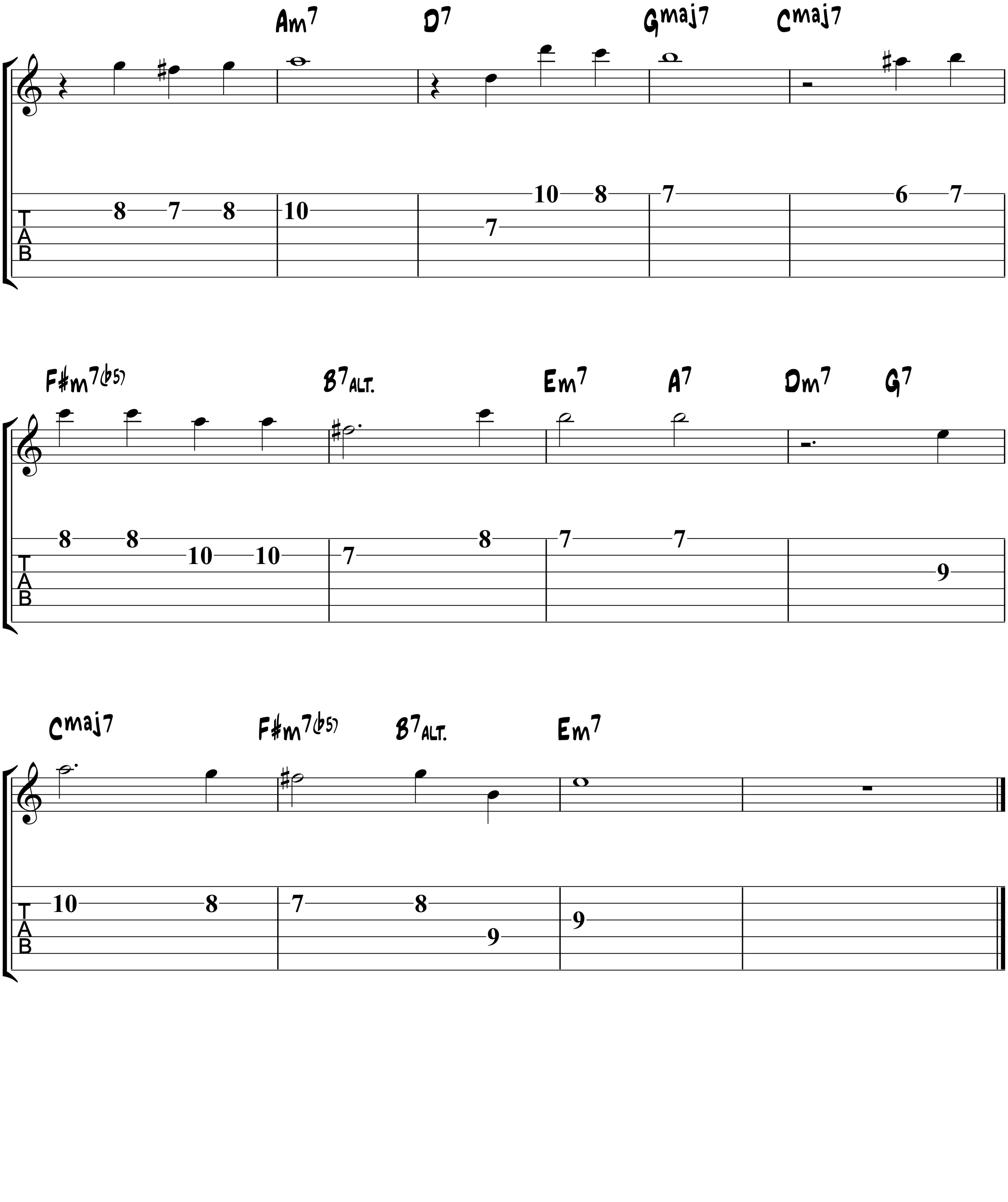
Click here to play backing track 2



Audio Example 11

Click here to play audio example 11




Am7 D7 Gmaj7 Cmaj7
F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7 A7 Dm7 G7
Cmaj7 F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7

Autumn Leaves Chord Melody

To finish your intro to jazz standards, here's an easy **chord melody** for Autumn Leaves.

Go slow with this **arrangement**, as it takes to get under your fingers.
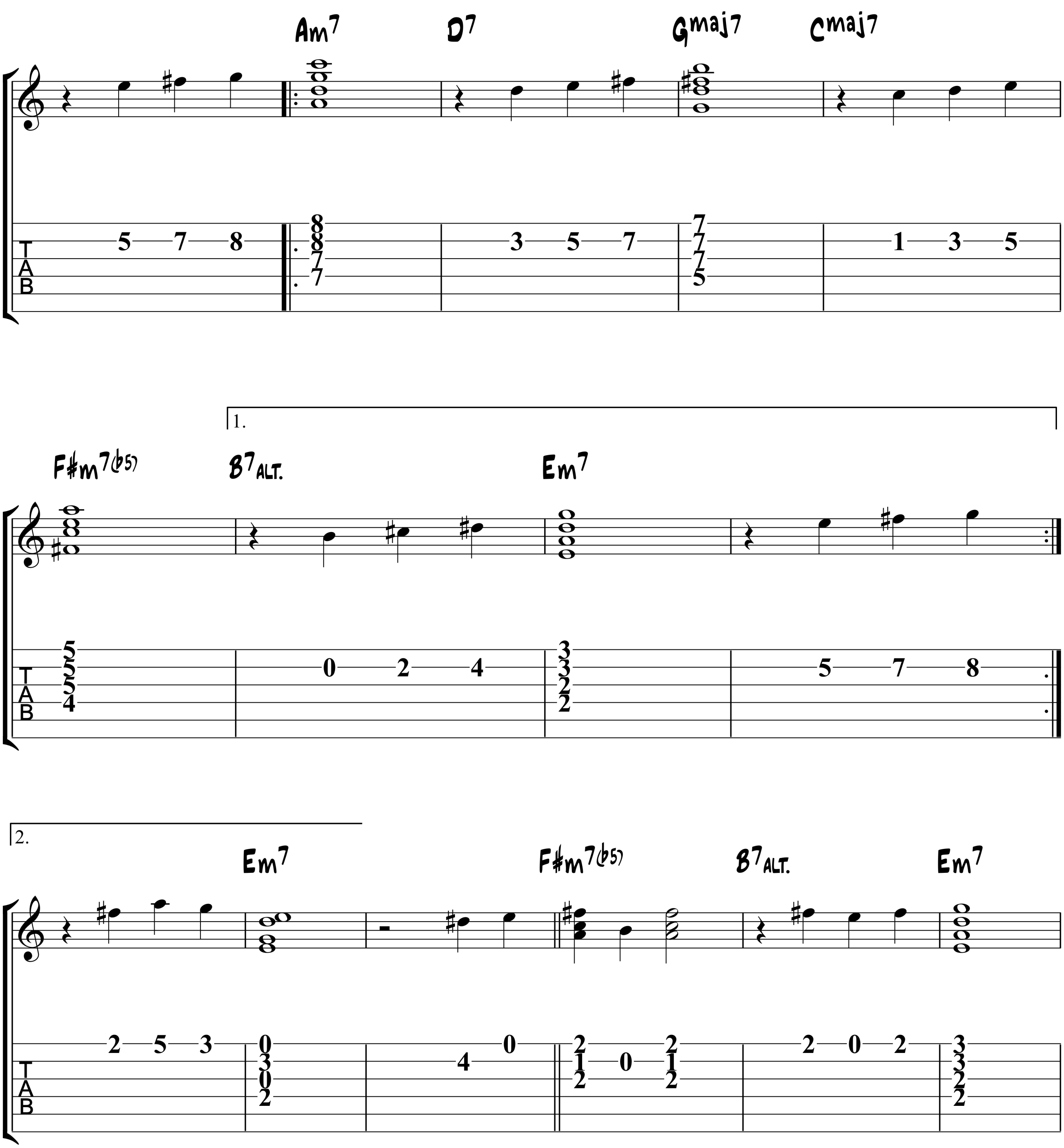
The melody has been moved to mostly the top **2 strings**, compared to the whole fretboard in the single-note example. This is to accommodate the chords played below the melody line in this arrangement.
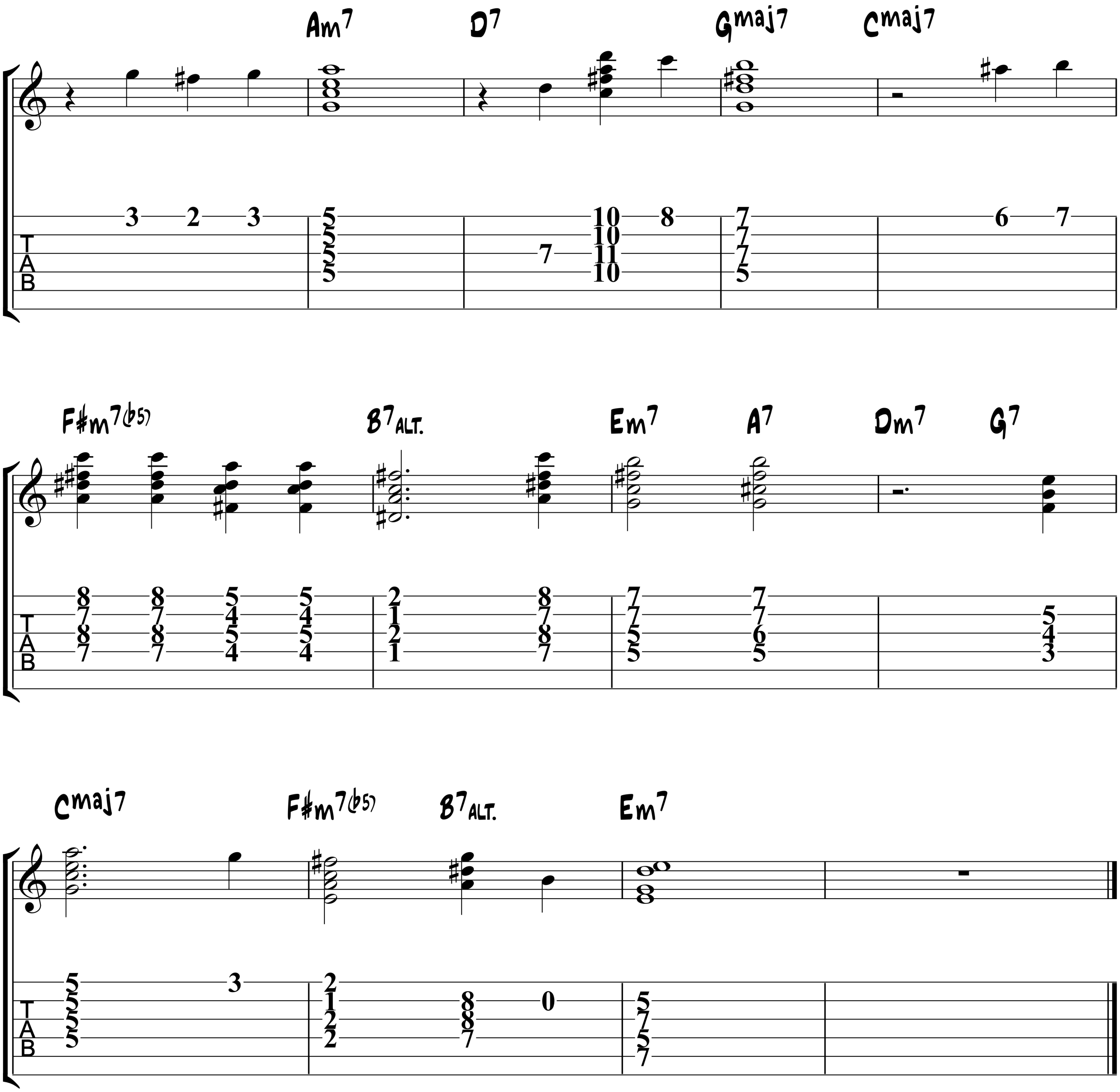
Backing Track 3

Click here to play backing track 3

Audio Example 12

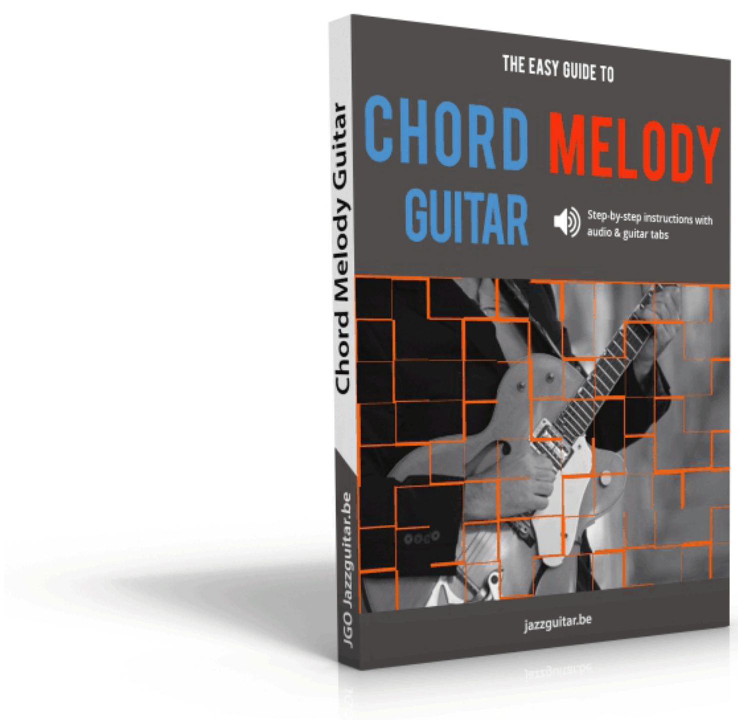
Click here to play audio example 12




Am7 D7 Gmaj7 Cmaj7
F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7 A7 Dm7 G7
Cmaj7 F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7

The Easy Guide To Chord Melody eBook

Do you listen to players such as Joe Pass, George Benson, and Barney Kessel and wonder how they get that smooth, sophisticated sound with their chord melodies and chord solos? Learn how to get that sound with our step-by-step eBook The Easy Guide to Chord Melody.



Joe Pass once said:

> "Guitarists should be able to pick up the guitar and play music on it for an hour, without a rhythm section or anything."

Playing bass, chords and melody at the same time (aka chord melody) is not an easy thing to do. It sounds easy enough when you hear Joe Pass or Barney Kessel do it, but getting that smooth sound doesn't come by itself...

Learning how to play chord melody requires a **step-by-step plan** and that's where The Easy Guide to Chord Melody comes in.

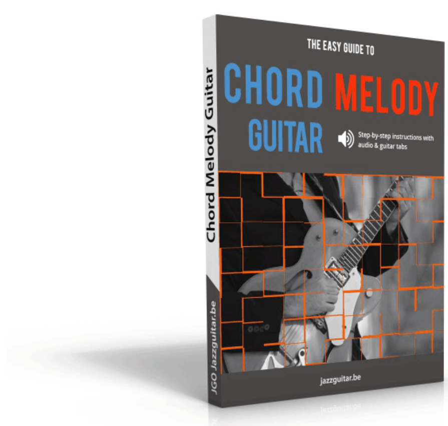
When you buy The Easy Guide to Chord Melody, you get:

- 7 chapters (356 pages) that break down essential chord melody and chord soloing concepts.
- Over 300 musical examples in TAB, audio, diagrams, photos, and notation.
- 14 backing tracks, so you can apply each concept to a musical situation
- Chord melody arrangements from beginner to advanced levels
- Chord soloing studies for beginner, intermediate, and advanced players.
- Comping studies for duo, trio, and solo jazz guitar.

Dallas Selman ★★★★★

> I have a vast collection of chord melody instruction books and videos – this is the best by far!

Click Here to download your copy of *The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Arpeggios*.



Chapter 3 - Jazz Guitar Arpeggios

In this section of the eBook you'll learn how to play arpeggios, how to use arpeggios to improvise over chord changes and jazz standards, as well as the music theory involved. Just like scales, arpeggios are an essential building block of the jazz player's vocabulary and give your solos that instant "jazzy" flavor (if done right). That's why understanding, practicing and mastering arpeggios is a necessity for all jazz guitarists.

Arpeggios, What Are They and How Do They Work?

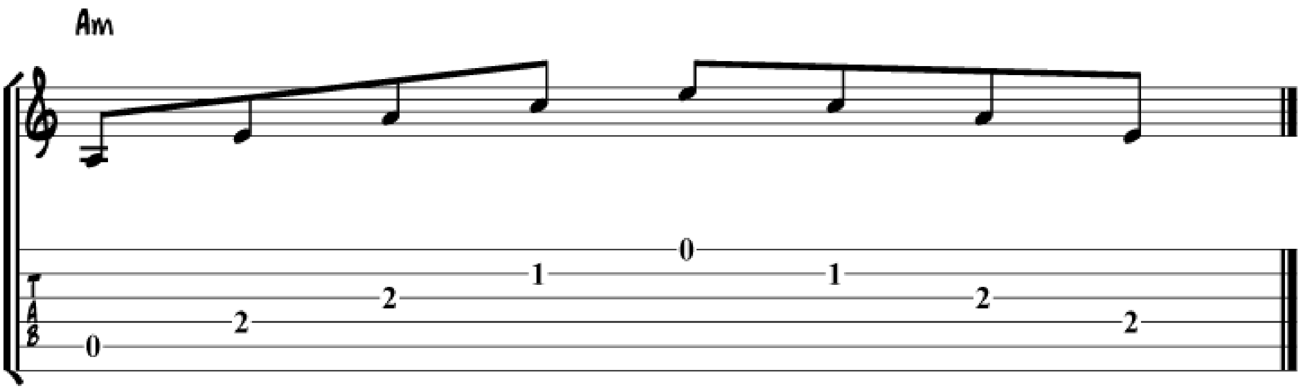
Here is the **definition** of the word *arpeggio*:

> An arpeggio is a broken chord, where the notes of the chord are played in succession instead of simultaneously.

Arpeggios are used in **all genres** of music, such as jazz, blues and rock. In jazz (and metal) arpeggios are used differently compared to other genres of music.
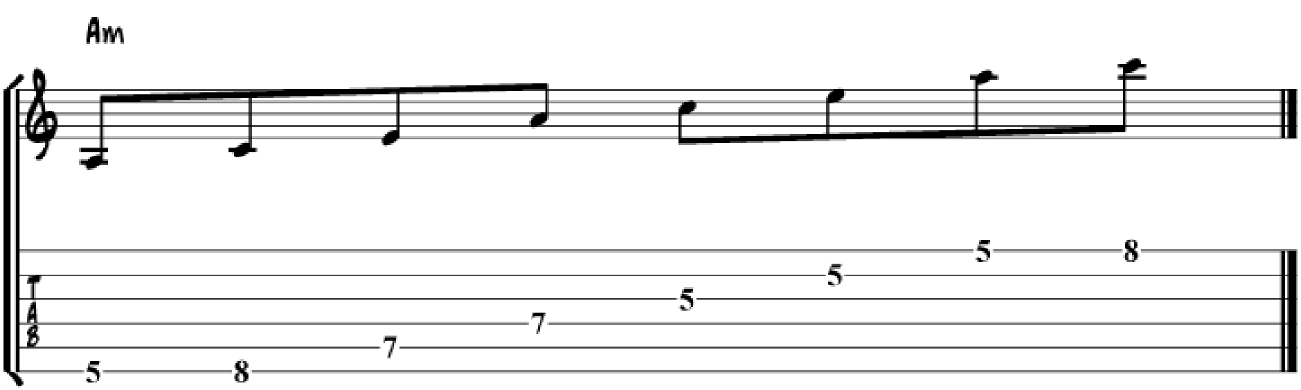
In **pop and classical music** for example, an arpeggio on guitar is usually used for accompaniment. Instead of playing or strumming the notes of a chord simultaneously, the individual notes of the chord are played in succession by applying a finger picking pattern, usually on acoustic guitar.

Here's an example of how an **Am arpeggio** can be used in pop music. The base of this arpeggio is a basic Am chord shape and the notes of the chord are not muted after they are played, but ring together.



In **jazz** (and blues, metal, etc), arpeggios are used for **soloing** instead of accompaniment. In contrast to arpeggios used in other genres of music, the notes of a jazz guitar arpeggio are usually played with a plectrum (unless you play fingerstyle) and muted after they are played, so they don't ring together. Another contrast is that these arpeggios are not based on a chord shape.

Here's an example of how an **Am arpeggio** would be played in jazz:



In this tutorial we will be focusing on the **jazz-type of arpeggios**.

What Are Arpeggios Used For?

Arpeggios are a great tool to **improvise** over chord progressions and jazz standards:

- Playing the chord tones in your guitar solo will outline the harmony of the tune. This gives your improvisation a sense of direction, making it more interesting to listen to.
- Arpeggios make it easier to improvise a nice voice leading, making your solos more melodic.
- You can use arpeggios to add color and complexity to your solos by using substitutions.

How To Start Using Arpeggios

Now, which arpeggios should you learn?

> Every jazz guitarists needs to know how to play the arpeggios of all chord types in all positions of the guitar neck.

This may not seem a simple task, but with a good practice routine, you will be able to **play all arpeggios without thinking** in a relative short period of time.

So, before learning how to use arpeggios in guitar solos, let's get started by learning **the basic positions**.

Basic Shapes: Minor, Dominant and Major

We're going to learn the **basic arpeggio shapes** (aka grips) by looking at the most common chord progression in jazz, the 2 5 1 (II V I).

In this example we'll be working with a **2 5 1 progression** in the key of G major:

Am7	D7	Gmaj7	%
II	V	I	

To play over this kind of chord progression, you need 3 types of arpeggios: minor, dominant and major.

The Minor Arpeggio

These are the **notes of the Am7 chord**:

Am7 arpeggio	A	C	E	G
	1	b3	5	b7

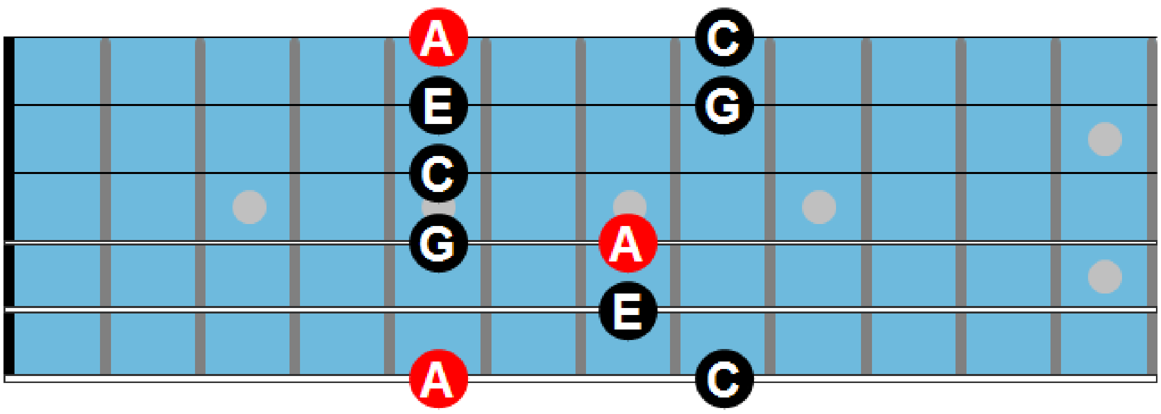
Here is the guitar arpeggio **shape for the Am7 chord**:



red dots represent the root or 1 of the guitar chord. The letter inside the box is the note name.



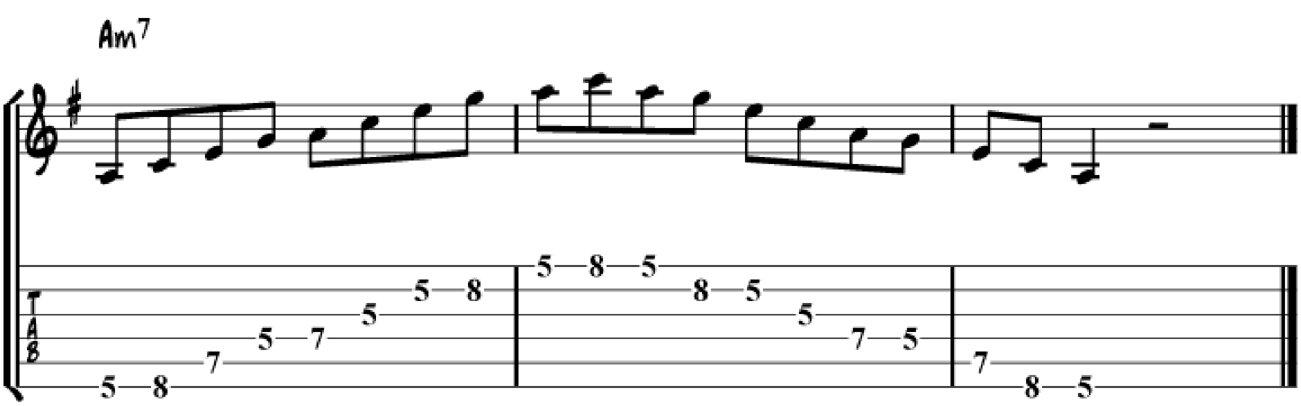
black dots represent the other chord notes.



Am7 Arpeggio Exercise #1: practice the A minor arpeggio as notated on the tabs below (until it flows naturally):

Audio Example 13
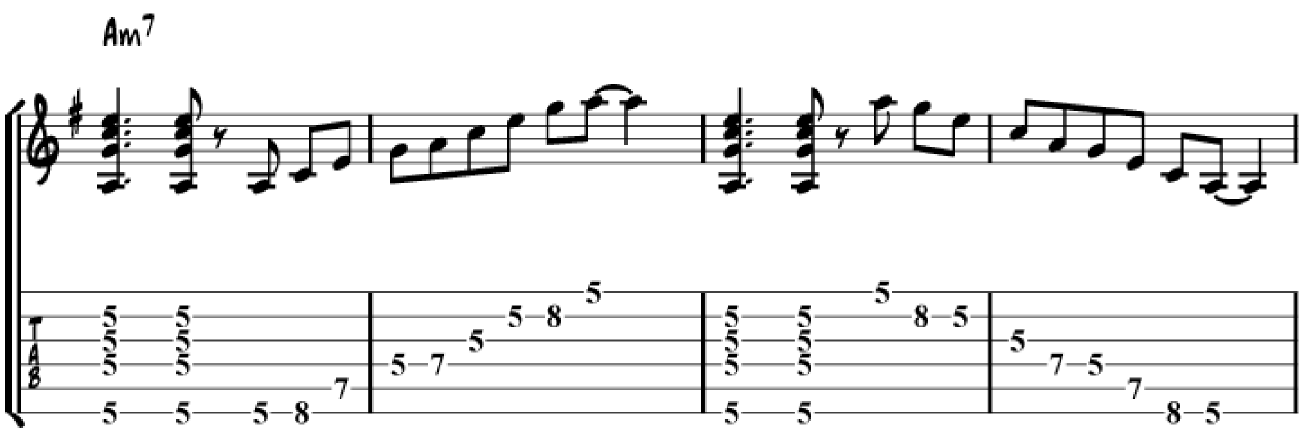
Click here to play audio example 13



Am7 Arpeggio Exercise #2: you can also practice arpeggios by playing the chord before the arpeggio, a good exercise for your ears.

Audio Example 14

Click here to play audio example 14

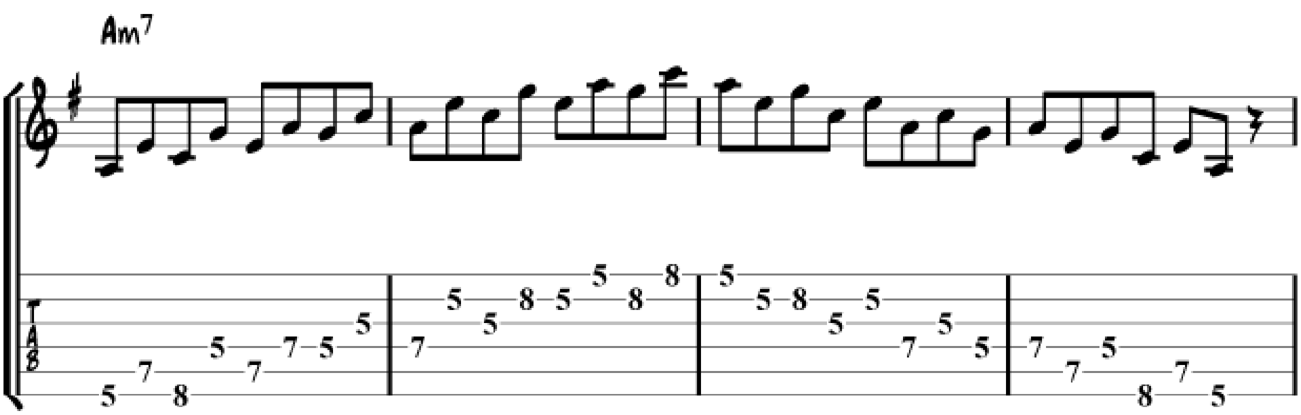


Here are 2 arpeggio patterns that are a little more **technically advanced**, practicing these is optional, but a good exercise to get the arpeggio shapes under your fingers. I've written out these patterns for Am7 only, but you can use the same pattern on all arpeggios, including the dominant and major arpeggios that follow.

Am7 Arpeggio Pattern #1: This first pattern plays the arpeggio in 5th and 4th intervals, achieved by skipping notes:

Audio Example 15

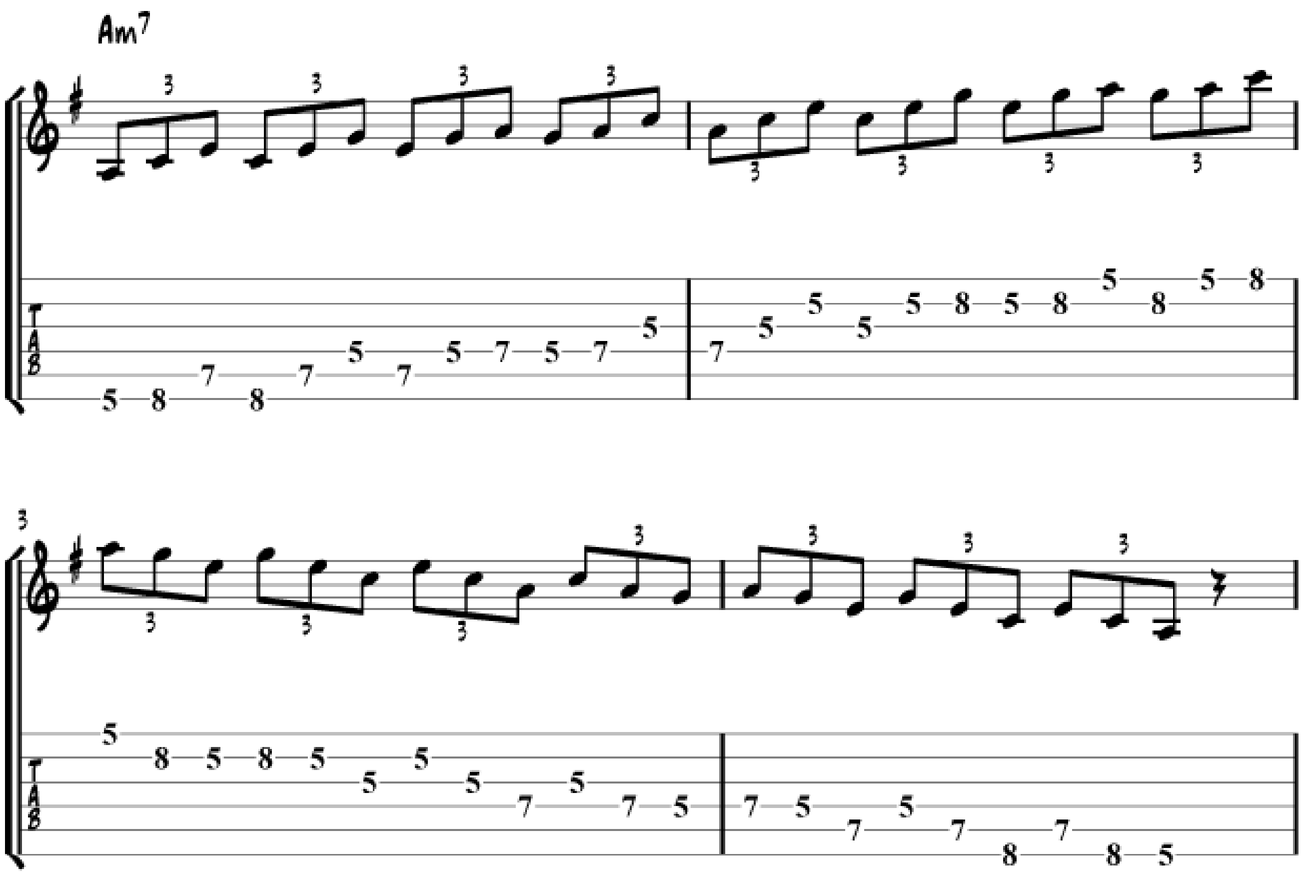
Click here to play audio example 15



Am7 Arpeggio Pattern #2: this pattern divides the arpeggio in groups of 3 notes:

Audio Example 16

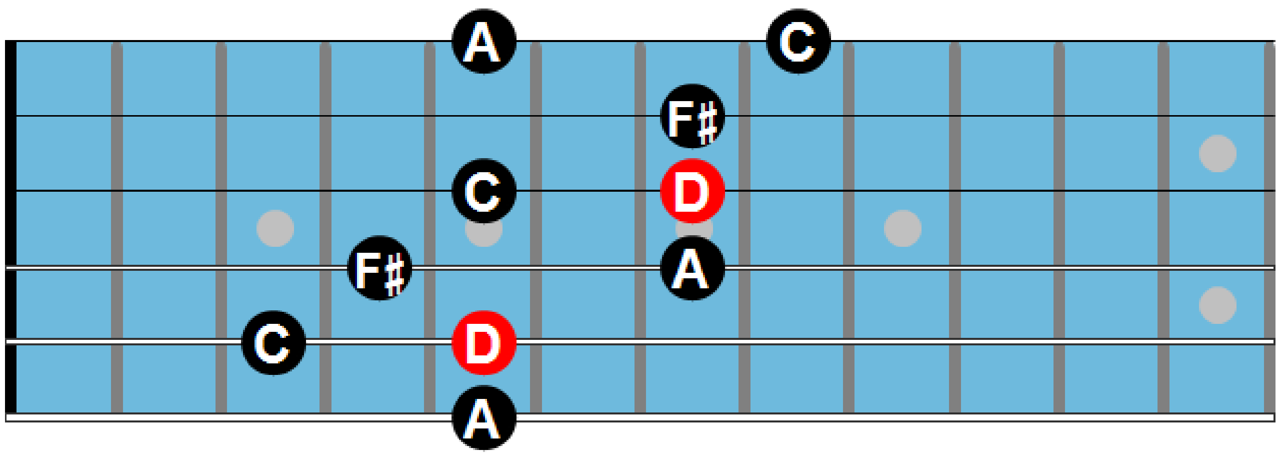
Click here to play audio example 16



The Dominant Arpeggio

Let's get on to the notes and formula of the **D7 chord**:

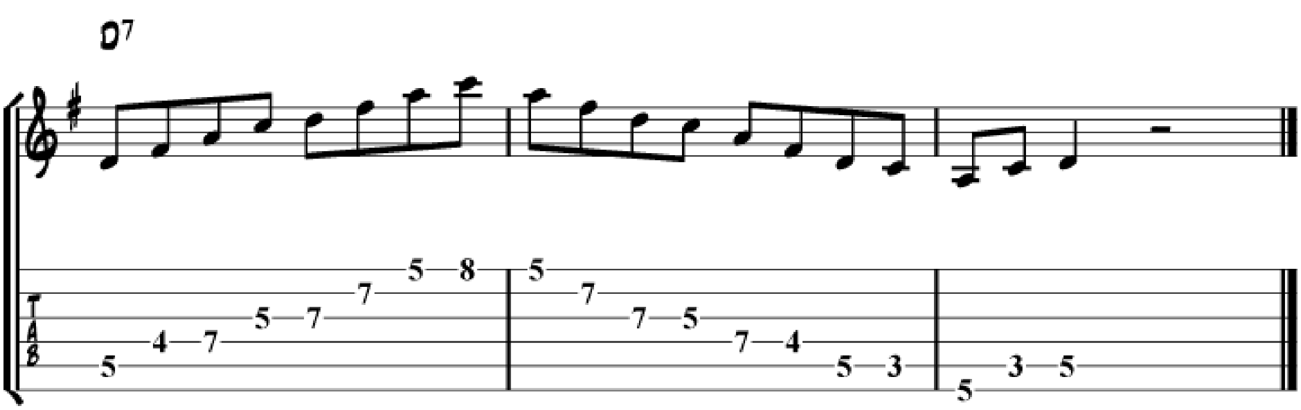
D7 arpeggio	D	F#	A	C
	1	3	5	b7



D7 Arpeggio Exercise #1: get this dominant arpeggio in your fingers by practicing like you did for the Am7 chord:

Audio Example 17

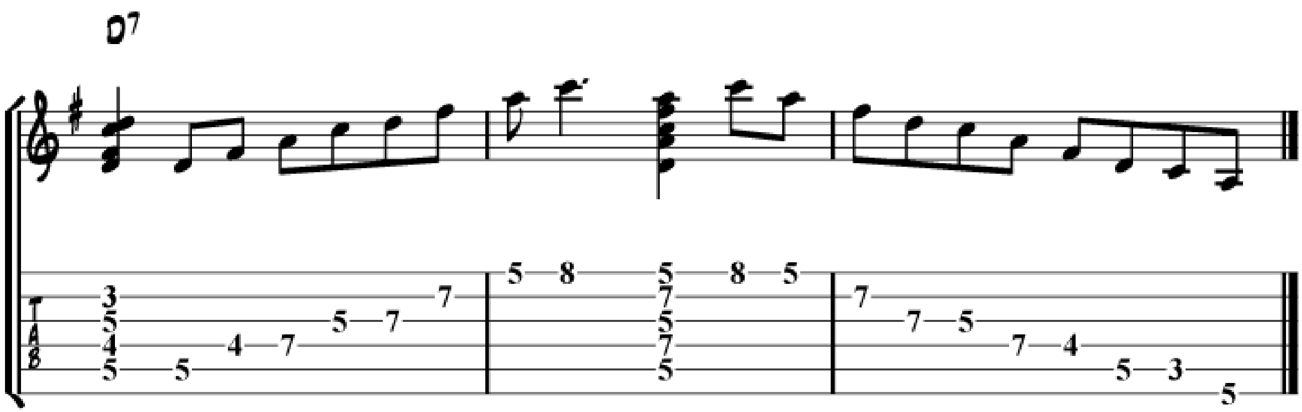
Click here to play audio example 17



D7 Arpeggio Exercise #2: Similar to the minor arpeggio examples, you can also play the chord before the arpeggio:

Audio Example 18

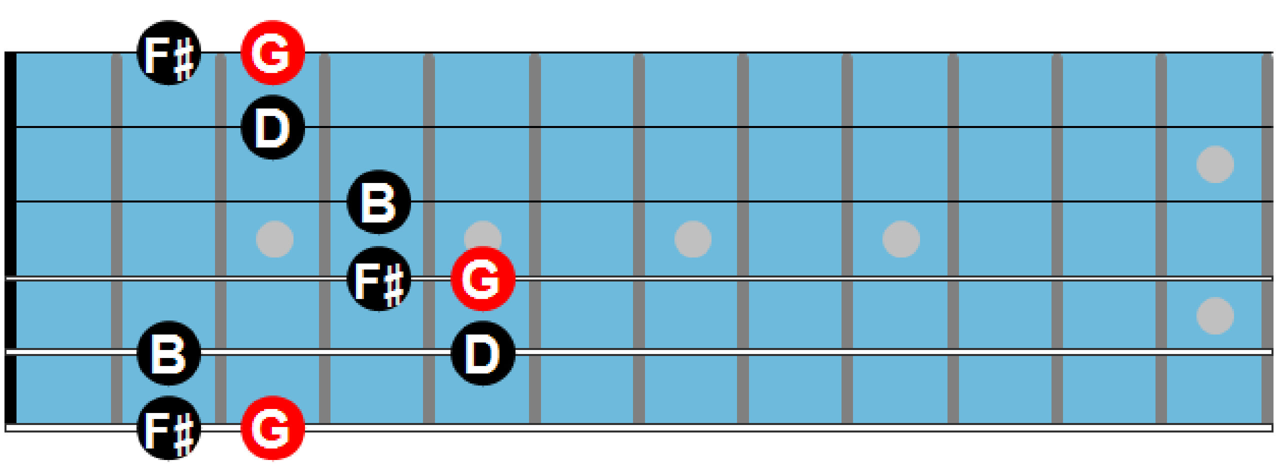
Click here to play audio example 18



The Major Arpeggio

And then we arrive at the last chord of the chord progression, the **Gmaj7 chord**:
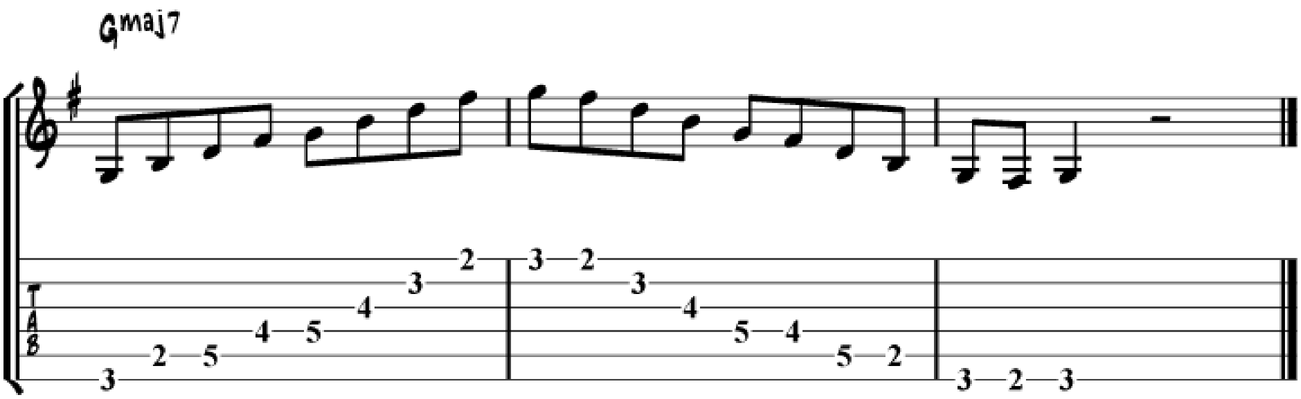
Gmaj7 arpeggio	G	B	D	F#
	1	3	5	7



Gmaj7 Arpeggio Exercise #1: practice this major arpeggio the way we did for the minor and dominant arpeggio:

Audio Example 19
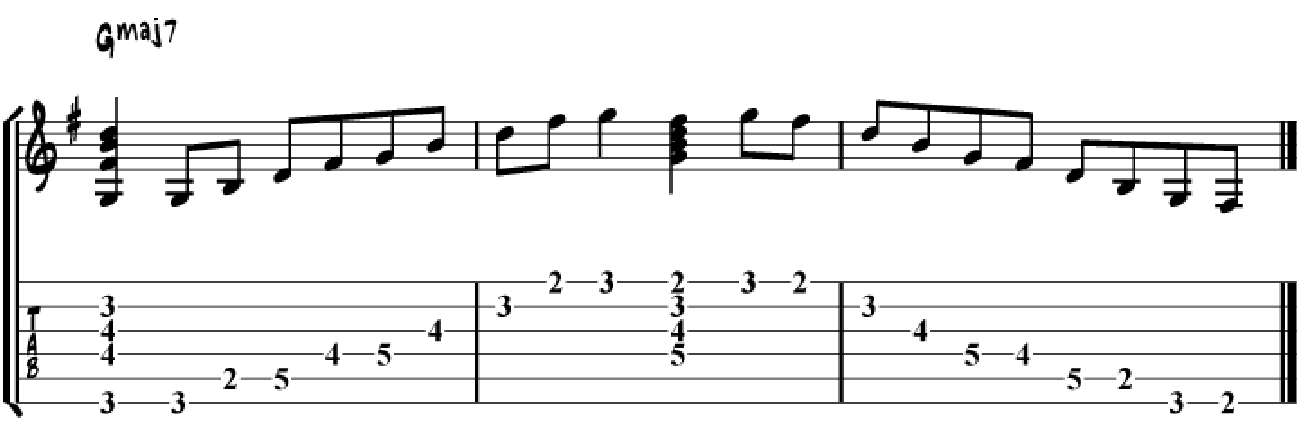
Click here to play audio example 19



Gmaj7 Arpeggio Exercise #2: with the Gmaj7 chord in front of the arpeggio:

Audio Example 20

Click here to play audio example 20

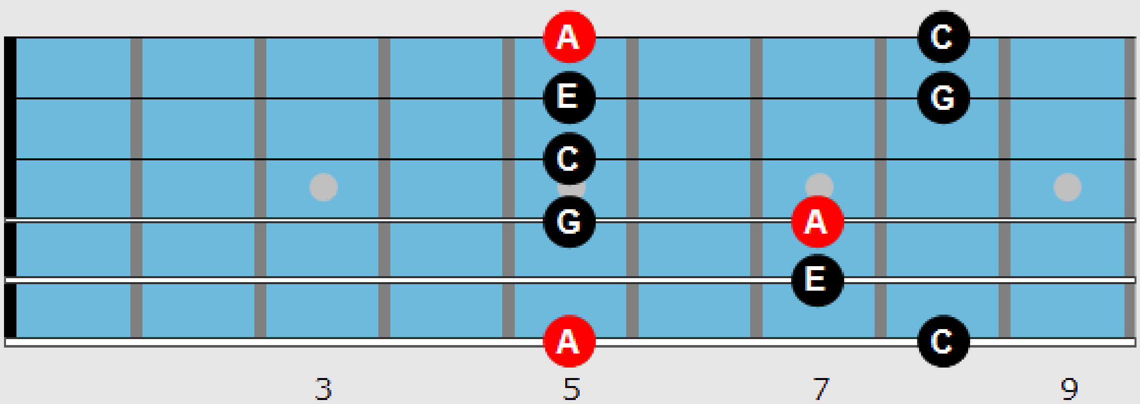


Movable Shapes

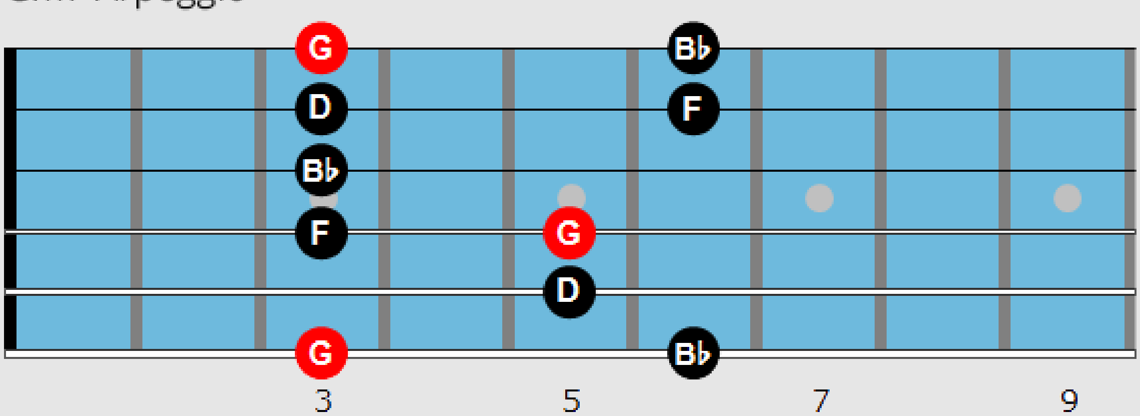
One thing you need to know: just like chords, all arpeggio shapes are movable. If you know the arpeggio for Am7 you can use that same 'shape' to find the arpeggios for other minor chords.

For example: let's say you want to find the arpeggio for Gm7. All we have to do is slide the Am7 arpeggio shape 2 frets down. Instead of starting on the 5th fret (in case of Am7), we start on the 3rd fret for Gm7. You move the root of the arpeggio and play the shape from there, like this:

Am7 Arpeggio



Gm7 Arpeggio



Combining The 3 Basic Arpeggio Shapes

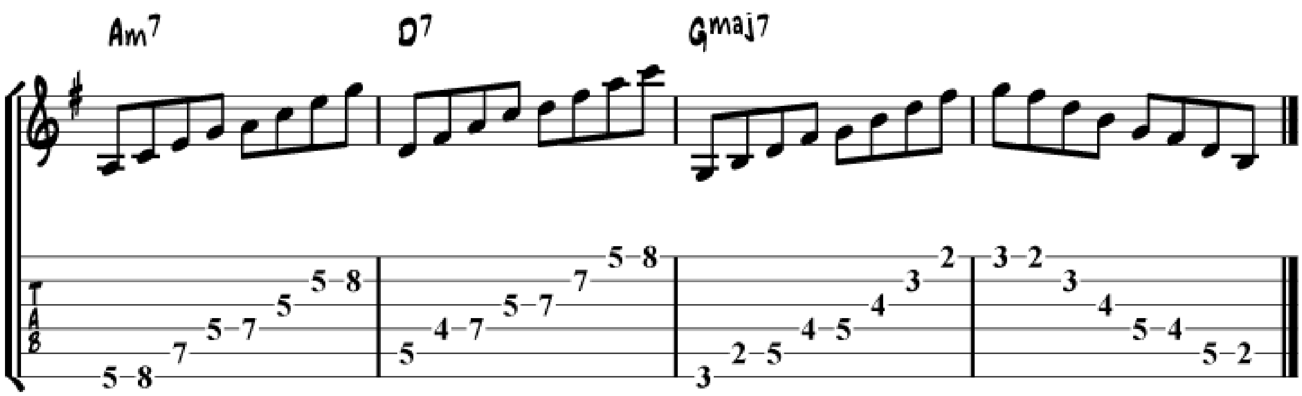
We know the basic positions for the arpeggios, now we're going to **combine** them so the arpeggios follow the 251 chord progression.

Exercise #1 - Ascending

The first thing we'll practice is playing the arpeggios **ascending**, starting from the root. This exercise is not very musical and you will never use them like this for improvisation, but it's a necessary step in learning how to play arpeggios.

Audio Example 21

Click here to play audio example 21

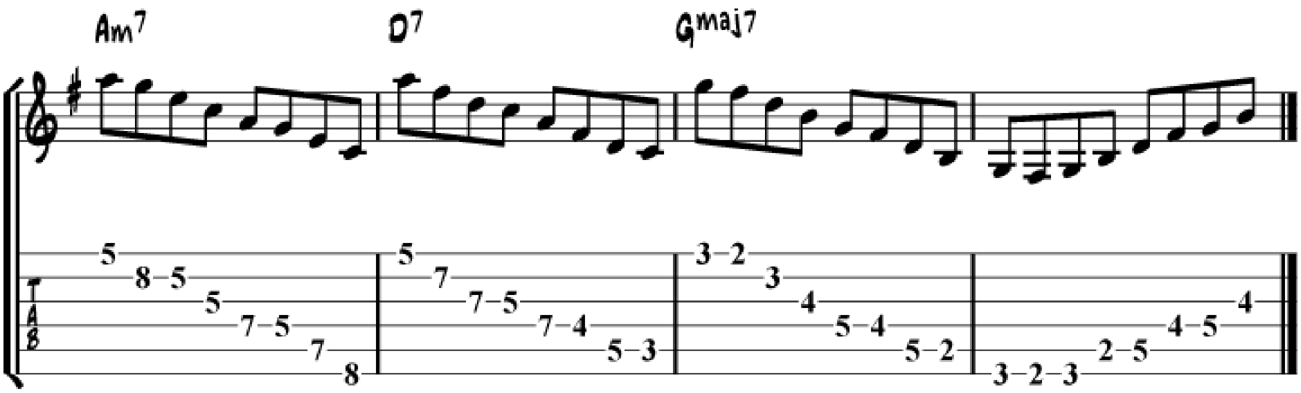


Exercise #2 - Descending

Next, we'll play the arpeggios **descending**:

Audio Example 22

Click here to play audio example 22

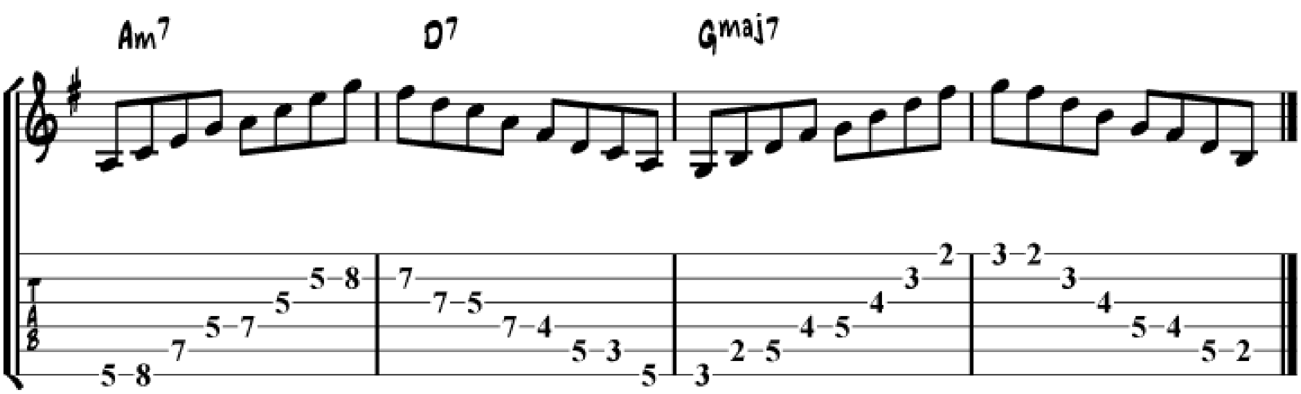


Exercise #3 - Alternating

The next step is **alternating the arpeggios**. We do this by playing the first arpeggio (Am7) for 1 bar and then switch to the nearest note of the second arpeggio (D7) in the second bar. The same happens when we switch to the third arpeggio (Gmaj7).

Audio Example 23

Click here to play audio example 23

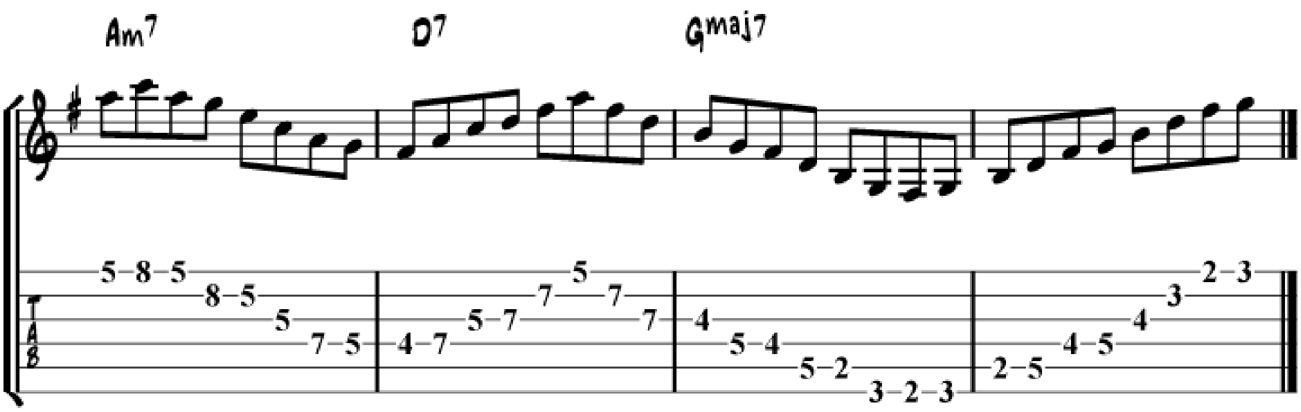


Exercise #4 - Alternating Variation

Let's have a look at another alternating example, starting from a **different location** of the guitar neck. Instead of starting the Am7 arpeggio on the low E-string, we will start it on the high E-string:

Audio Example 24

Click here to play audio example 24



When you've got these basic arpeggio shapes under your fingers, the following (important) step is to **start improvising** using these shapes. Practicing arpeggios starting from the root in streams of 1/8 notes is an important step in the learning process, but not very musical. Once you got this step under your fingers, it's important to get creative so you don't end up sounding like a robot on stage...

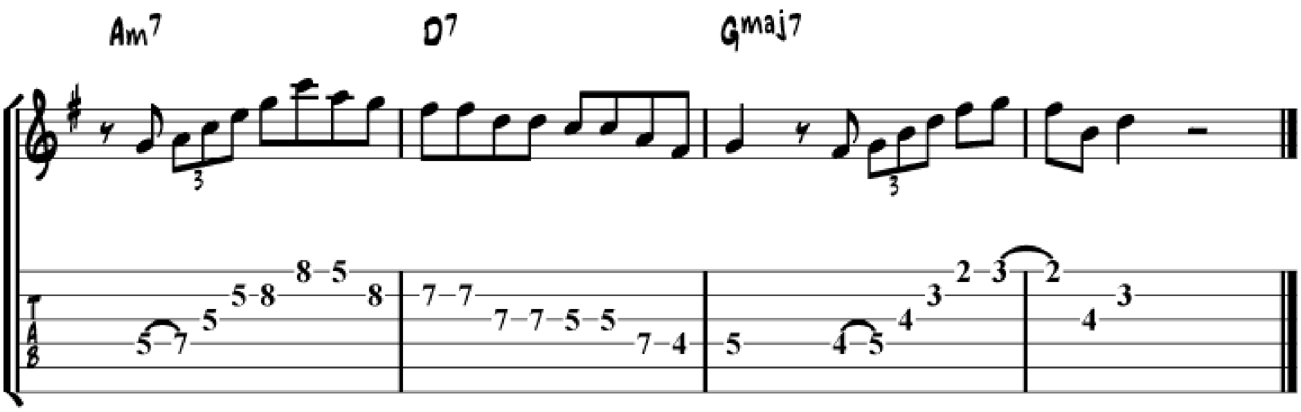
> Arpeggios can be started on any note and played in any order. You can mix notes, skip notes and use any rhythm you can think of. Be creative!

Arpeggio Lick #1

Here's an **example**, using the same arpeggio shapes over the same 251 chord progression, but with a variety in rhythm and note order:

Audio Example 25

Click here to play audio example 25



Now start to **improvise yourself**, using only the basic shapes you learned so far. Use the backing track to make sure you make the arpeggio change at the right time.

Arpeggio Charts

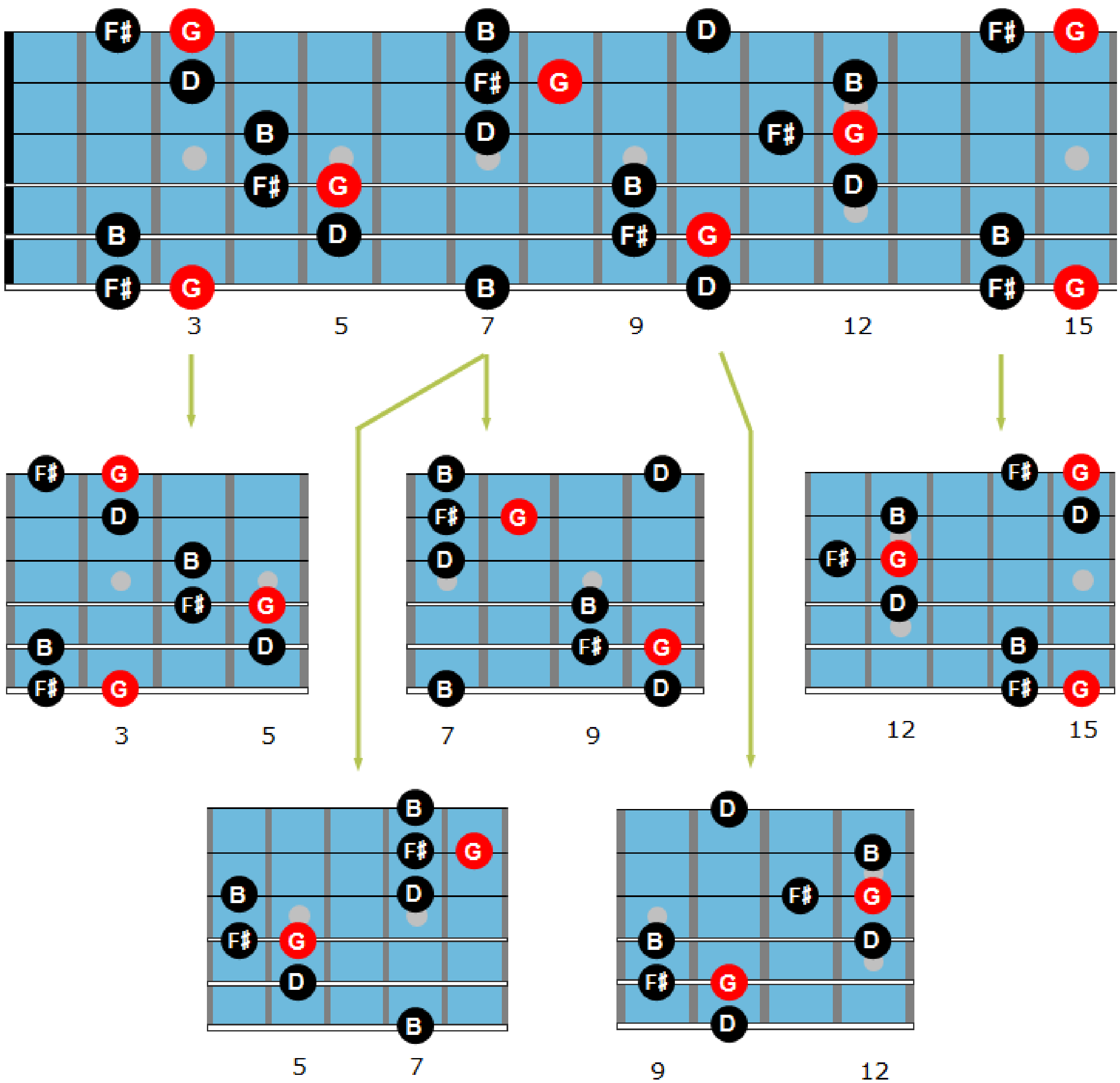
So far in this tutorial we worked with arpeggio shapes that have their **root on the E-string (Am7 and Gmaj7)** or **on the A-string (D7)**. There are of course a lot of other positions these arpeggios can be played in.

The following charts in the list below are an **overview of arpeggio positions** for the most common chord types.

The **big diagram** shows all the notes of the arpeggio over the entire neck. The **smaller diagrams** beneath show the individual arpeggio grips.

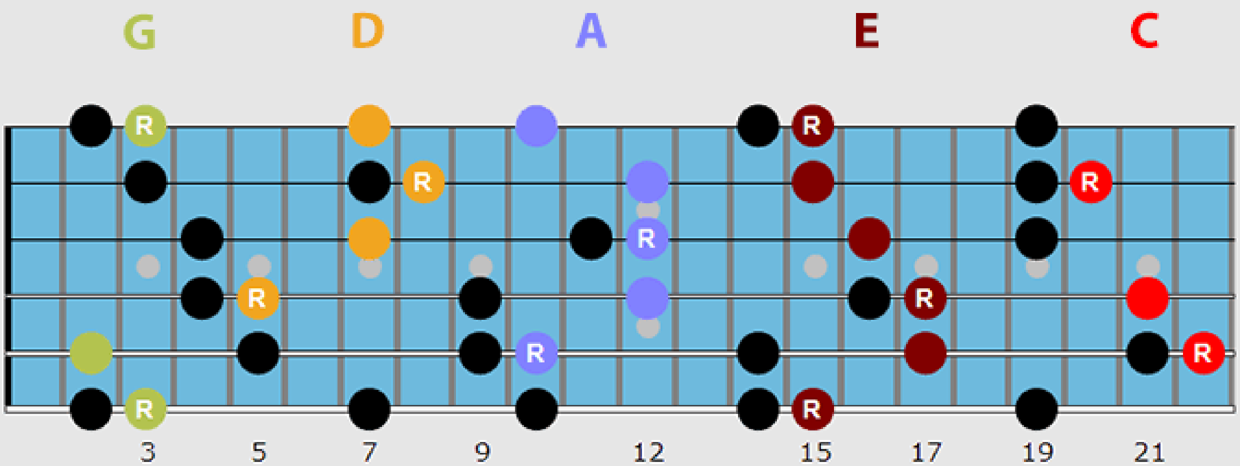
> All 22 grips below need to be memorized and practiced so you can play them fluently and without hesitation...

Major Arpeggios (Gmaj7)

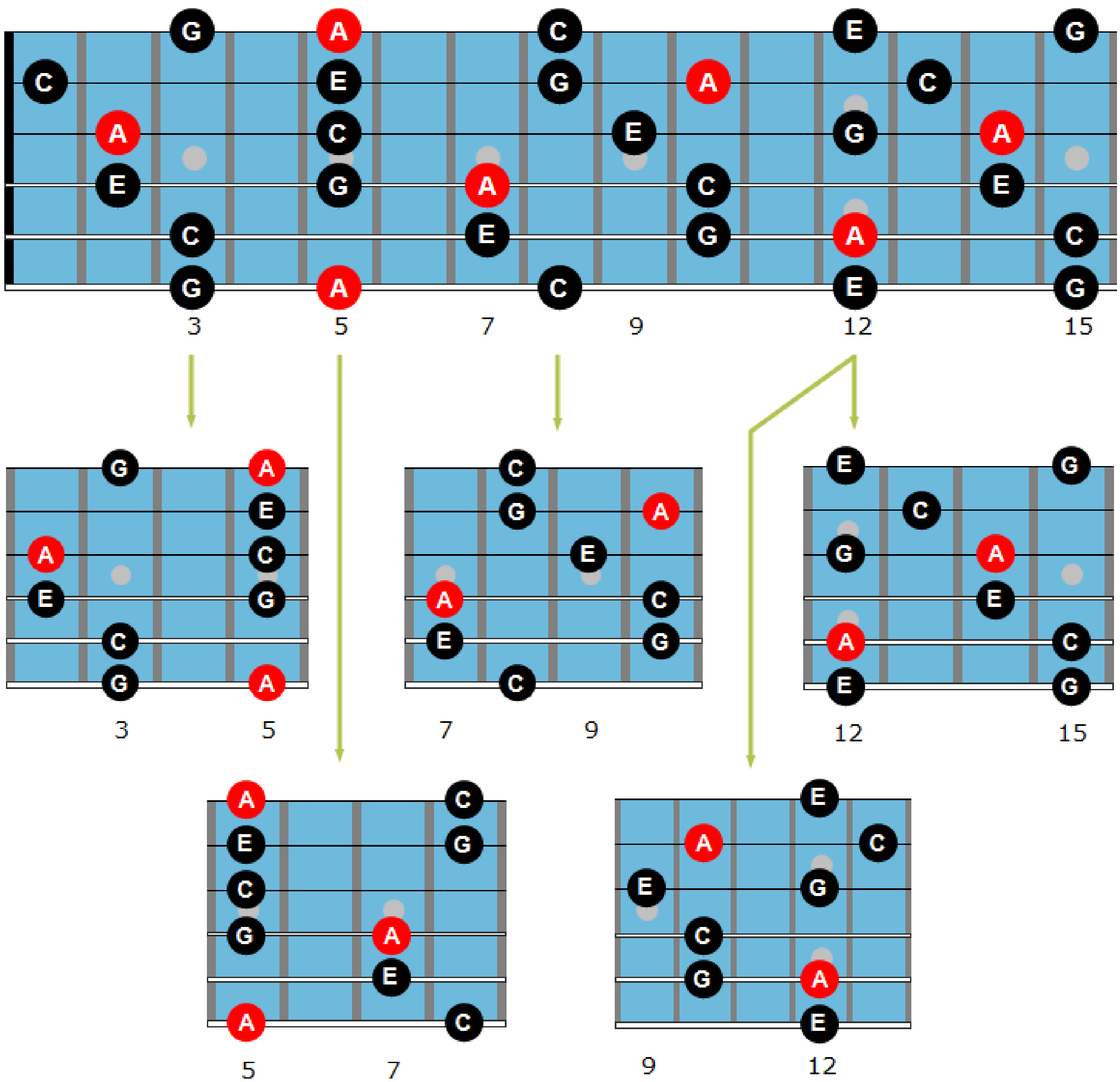


C A G E D

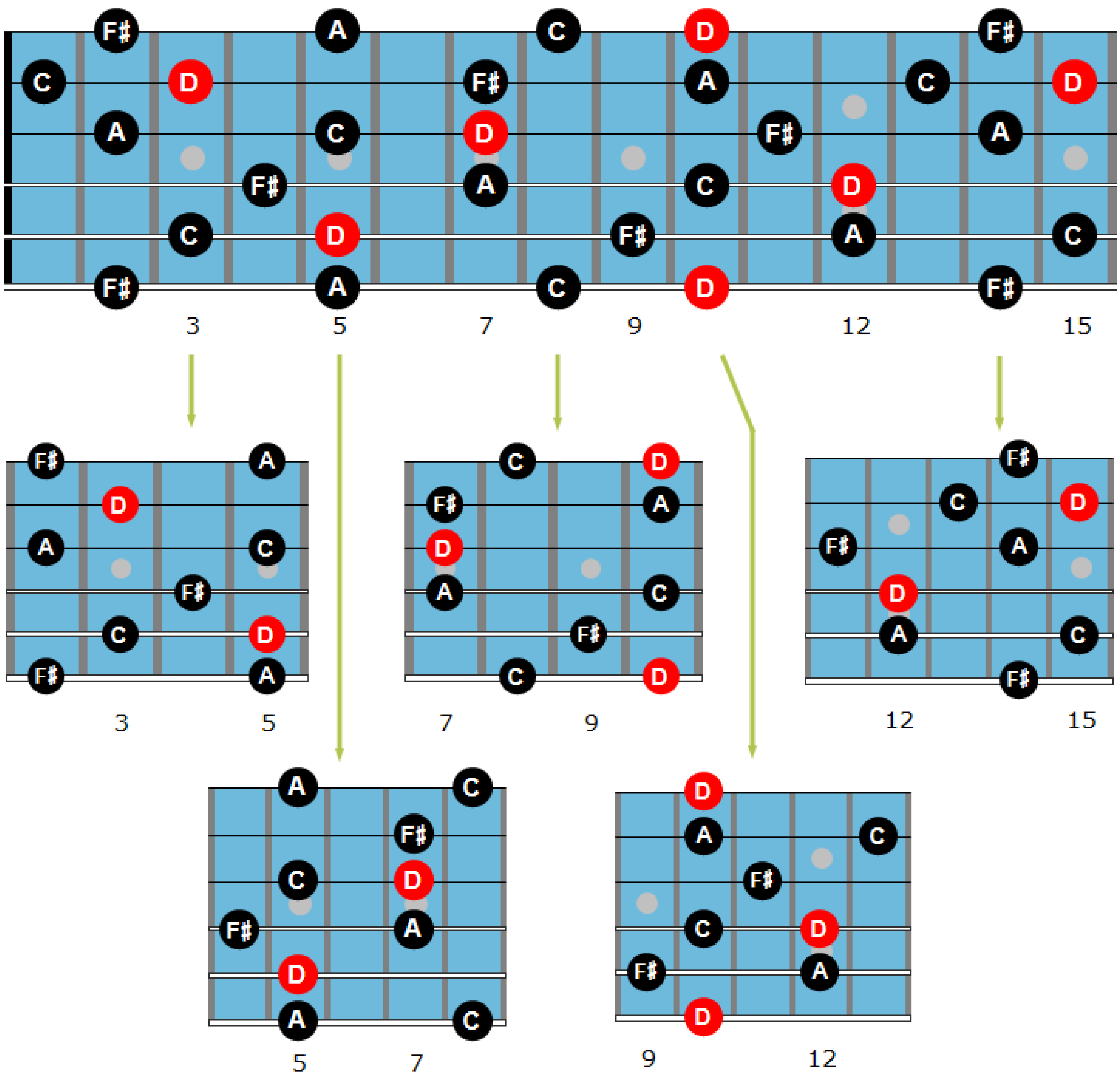
Those of you familiar with the CAGED system, will recognize that the 5 Gmaj7 arpeggio shapes above correspond with the 5 basic chord shapes (C A G E D):



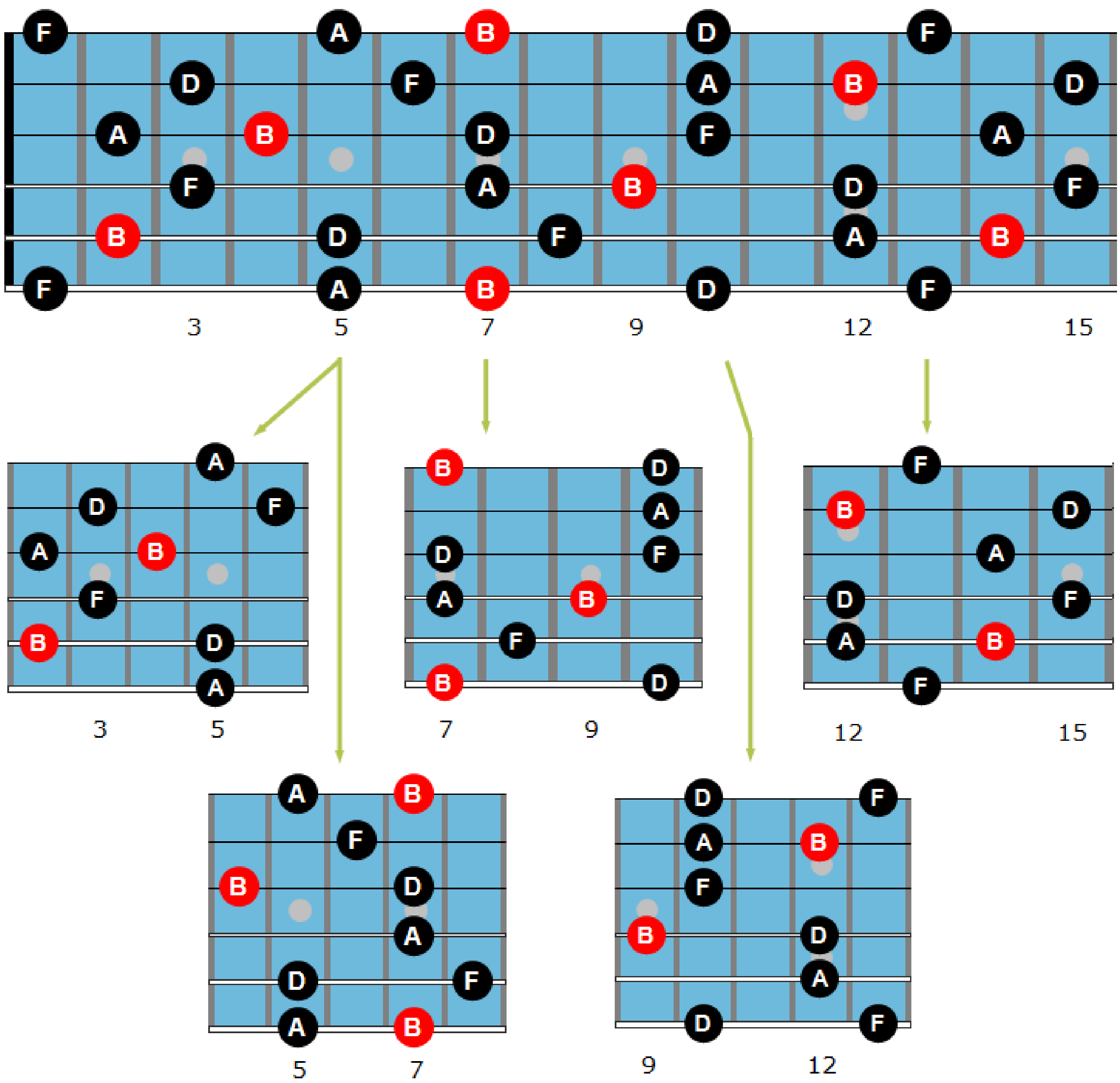
Minor Arpeggios (Am7)



Dominant Arpeggios (D7)

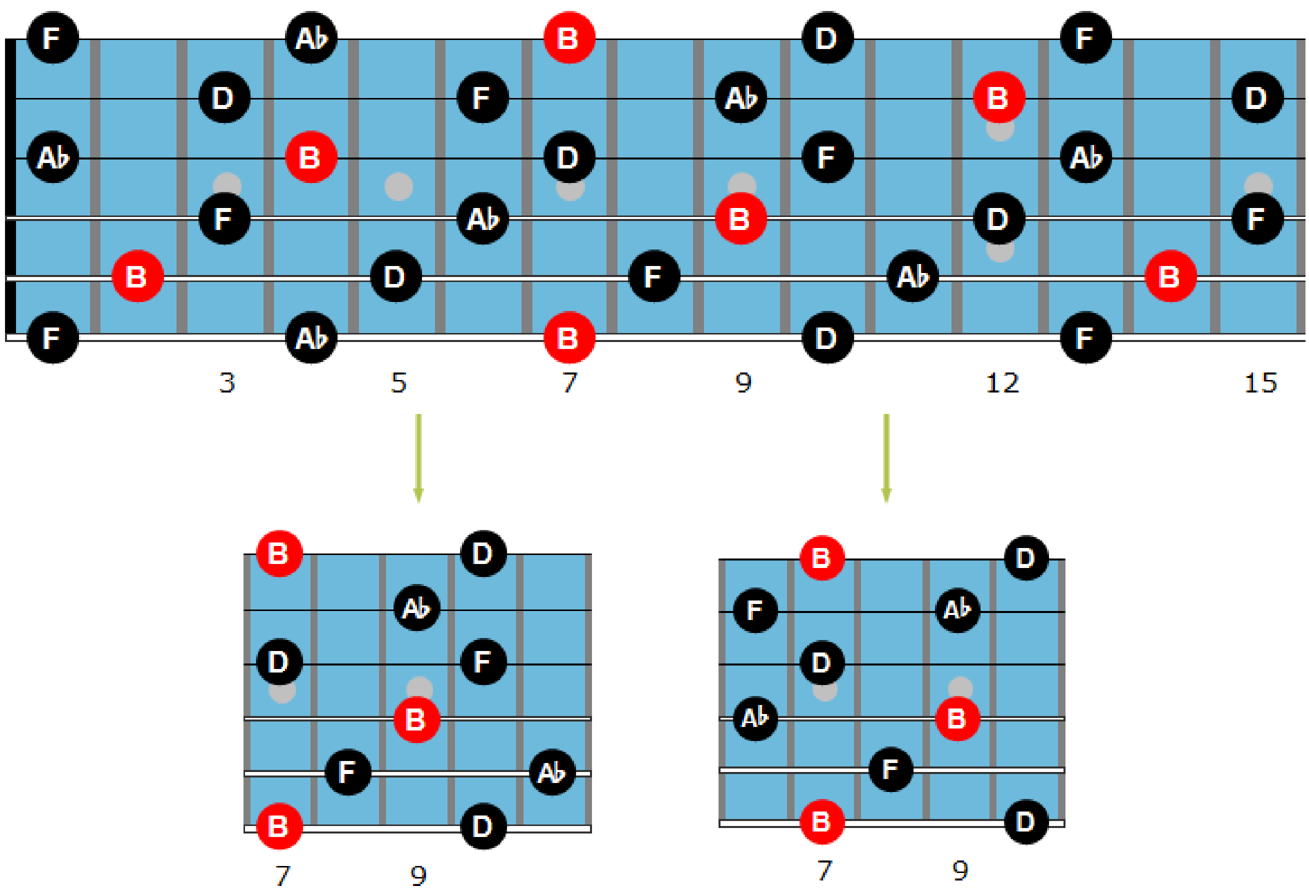


Half-Diminished Arpeggios (Bm7b5)



Diminished Arpeggios (B°7 = D°7 = F°7 = Ab°7)

You only need to learn 2 grips for diminished chords because diminished chords are **symmetrical** (learn more about diminished chords here).



Arpeggios of the C Major Scale

A good exercise to practice the arpeggio shapes above is to play the **arpeggios of the chords of the C major scale in 1 position**.

Here are the **diatonic chords in the key of C** (if you're not sure where these chords come from, have a look at our Chord Theory Tutorial):

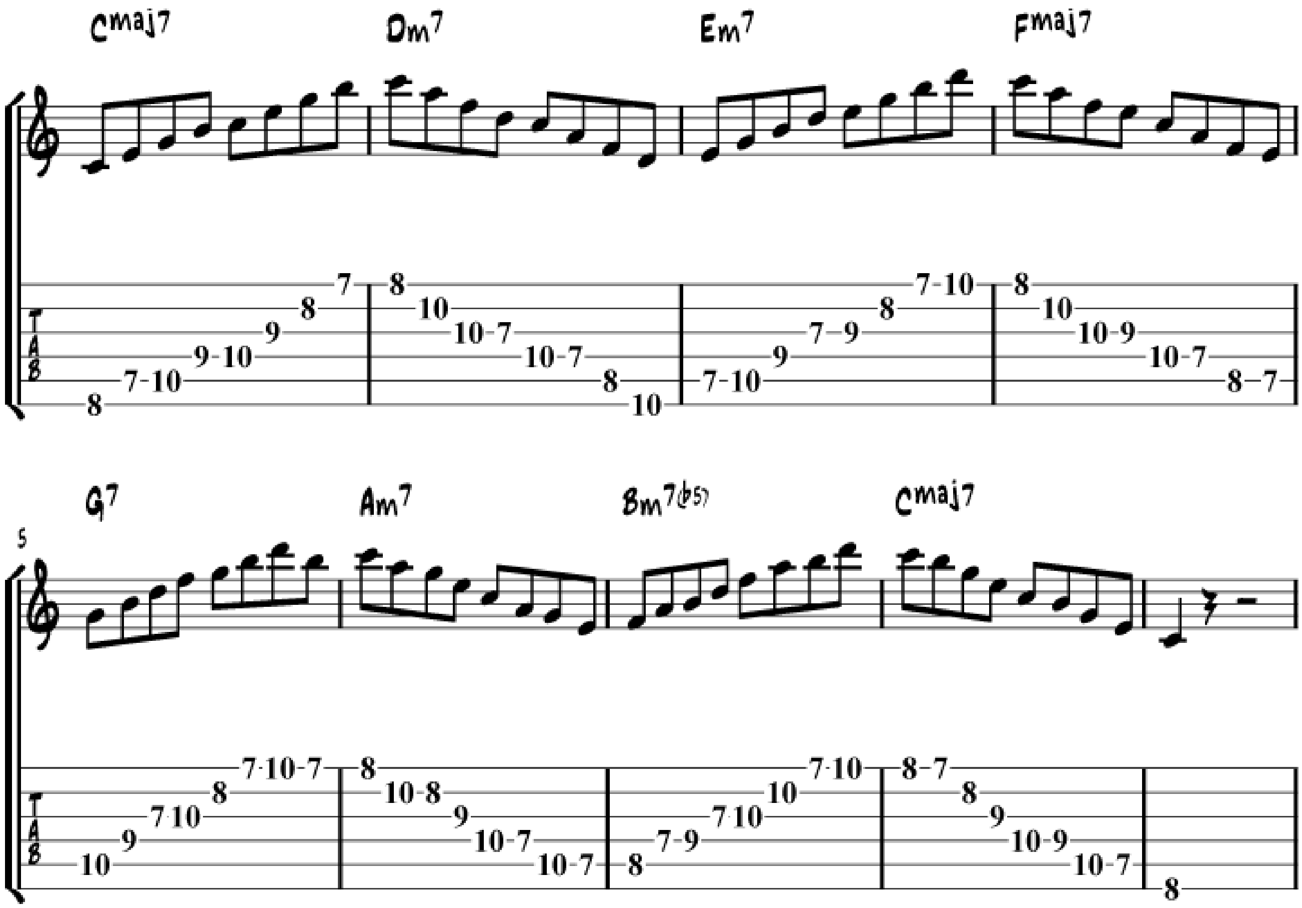
Cmaj7	Dm7	Em7	Fmaj7	G7	Am7	Bm7b5
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII

C Major Scale Arpeggios Exercise #1

In this exercise we play every chord arpeggio for the length of 1 bar, while staying in the **7th position** (more about guitar positions).

Audio Example 26

Click here to play audio example 26

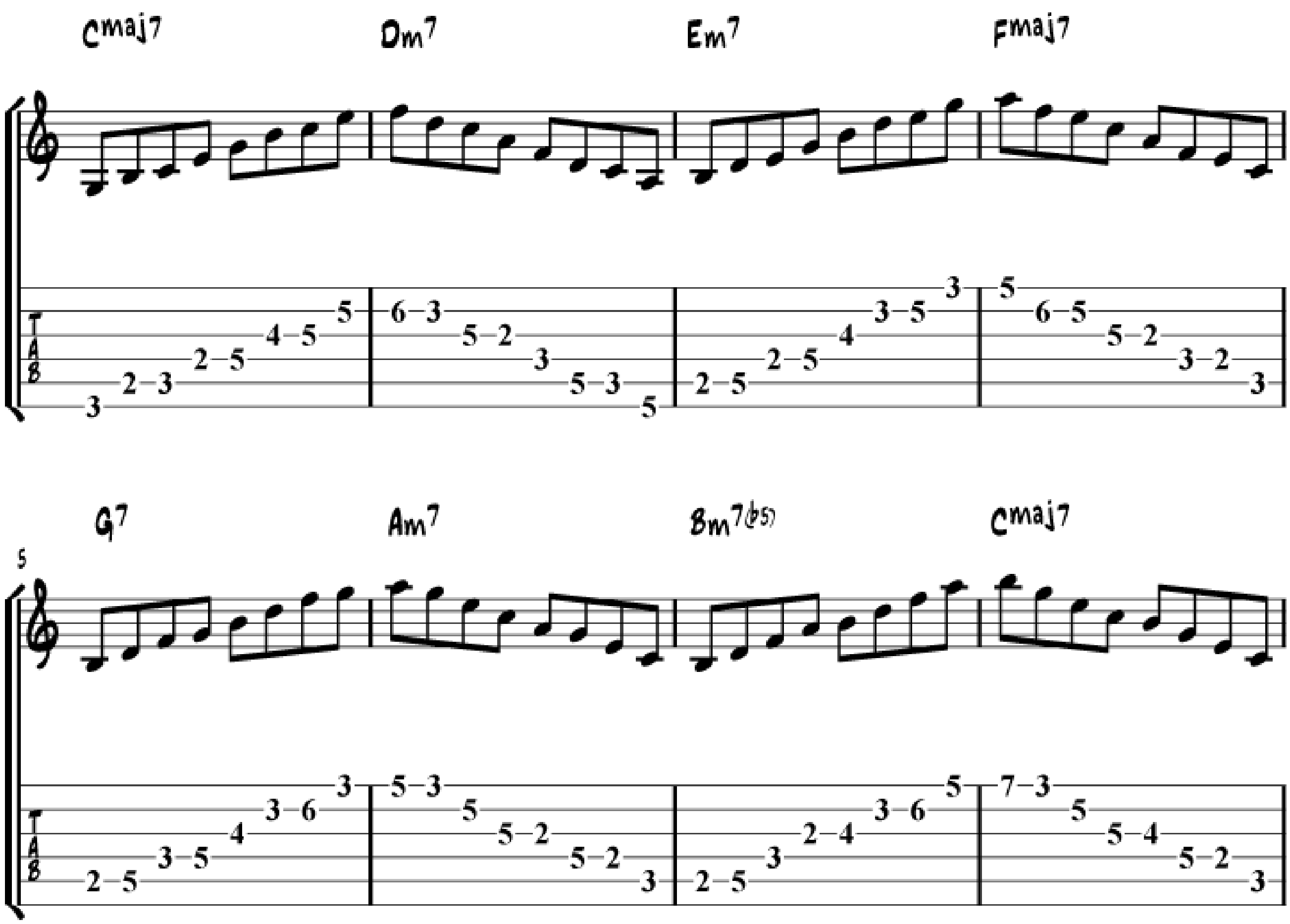


C Major Scale Arpeggios Exercise #2

This is the same exercise as above, but this time starting in **2nd position**:

Audio Example 27

Click here to play audio example 27



Learn this exercise in **all positions**, so you don't have blind spots on the guitar neck.

Spicing It Up - Approach Notes

Arpeggios relate directly to the chord you're soloing over, but they can sound a bit plain, as they offer nothing new to that chord. To help you avoid this in your solos, you'll have a look at some common **chromatic techniques** over arpeggios.

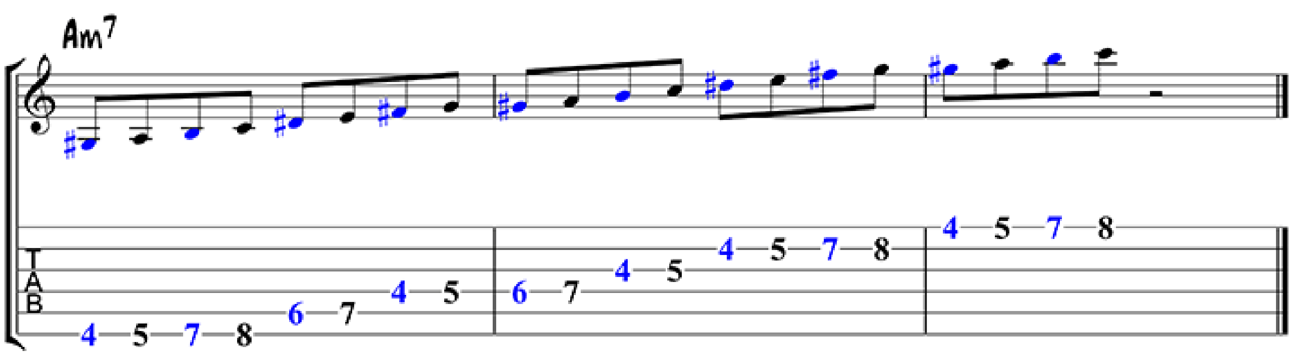
> The first arpeggio concept is called approach notes, where you approach any note in an arpeggio by one fret below. When doing so, you create a tension and release sound in your lines.

The only rule is that you **can't resolve to the chromatic notes**. So, if you play an approach note, you then have to play a chord tone afterwards.

Here's an example of this technique in action, as you approach each note in an **Am7 arpeggio** from a fret below. The **approach notes are in blue** so you can easily see them on the fretboard. After you've worked this exercise over Am7, take it to other keys and arpeggio types in your solos:

Audio Example 28

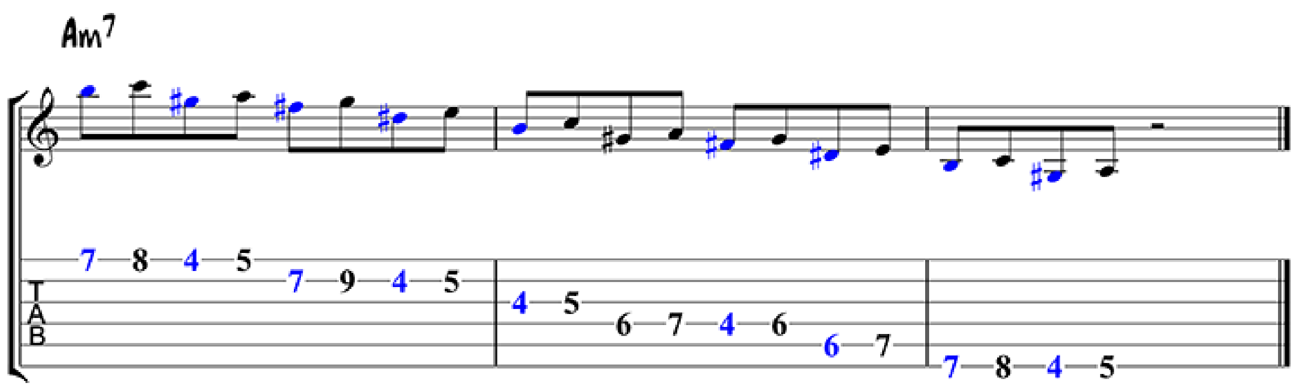
Click here to play audio example 28



Here's the **reverse** of the previous exercise as you now descend an Am7 arpeggio with approach notes.

Audio Example 29
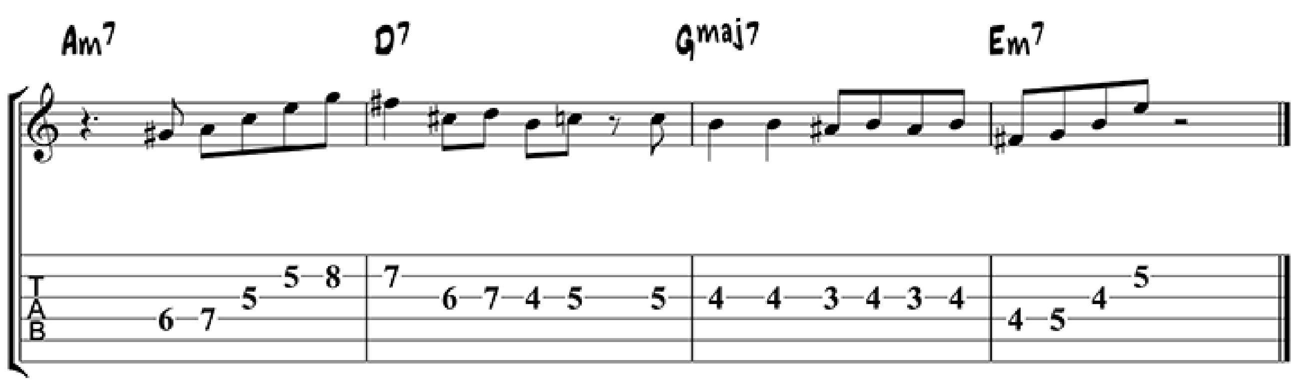
Click here to play audio example 29



Here's a lick that uses arpeggios and approach notes as you bring this concept to a **musical** situation. Learn this lick in the given key, then take it to other keys if you can. From there, write out a few licks of your own over this progression.

Audio Example 30

Click here to play audio example 30



Spicing It Up: Enclosures

The next bebop technique uses two chromatic notes for each arpeggio note, as you **encircle** chord tones in your lines.
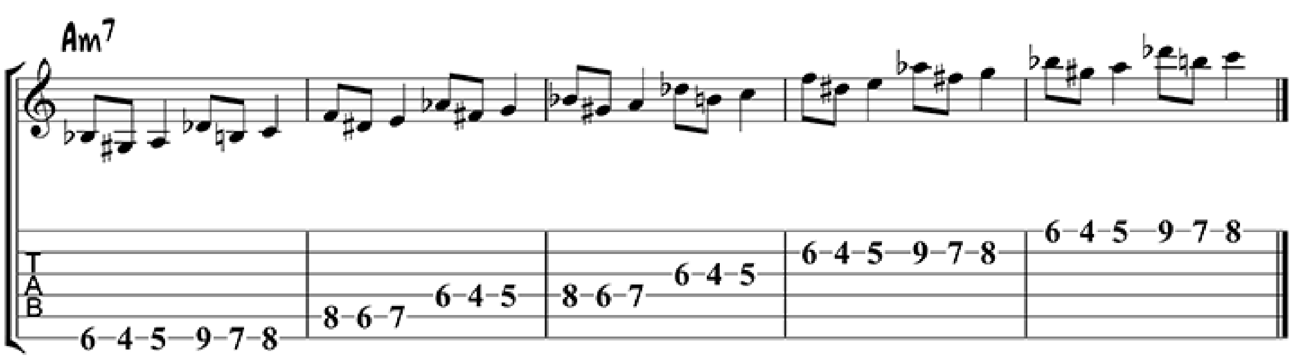
> When playing enclosures, you play one fret above, then one fret below, then the chord tone.

There are a number of enclosures that you can use in your solos, but this is the best one to start with as it's the most commonly used.

Here's an example of an enclosure as applied at an **Am7 arpeggio**, ascending a two-octave version of that arpeggio. Work this exercise with a metronome in as many keys as you can, and then take it to other arpeggio shapes.

Audio Example 31
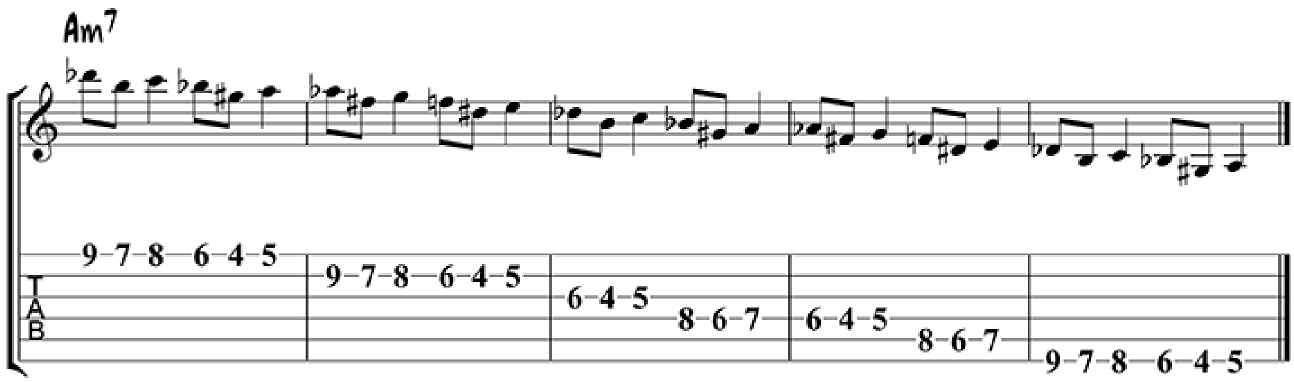
Click here to play audio example 31



The next exercise **reverses** the previous one, as you now descend an Am7 arpeggio with enclosures.

Audio Example 32

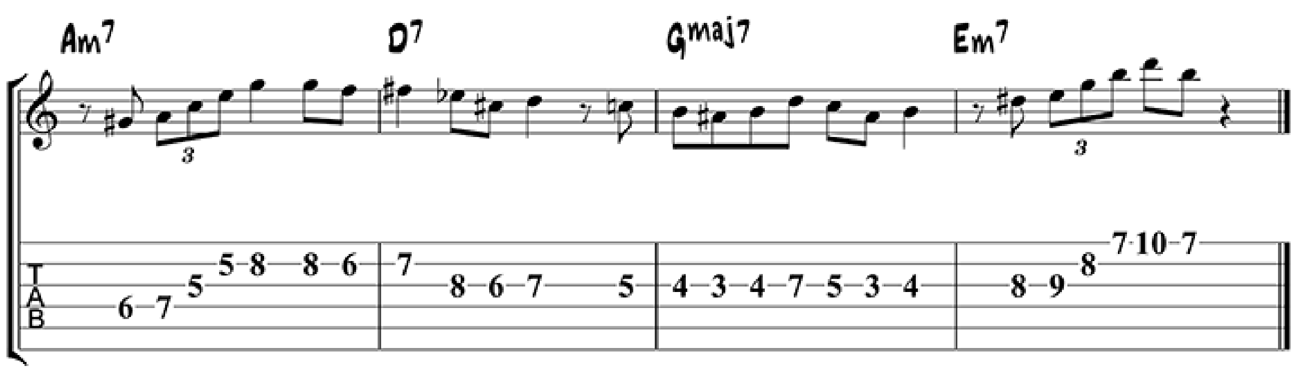
Click here to play audio example 32



Here's a lick that uses **arpeggio enclosures** over a ii V I vi progression in G major. After you learn this lick, write out 2-3 of your own that use arpeggios and enclosures in its construction.

Audio Example 33

Click here to play audio example 33

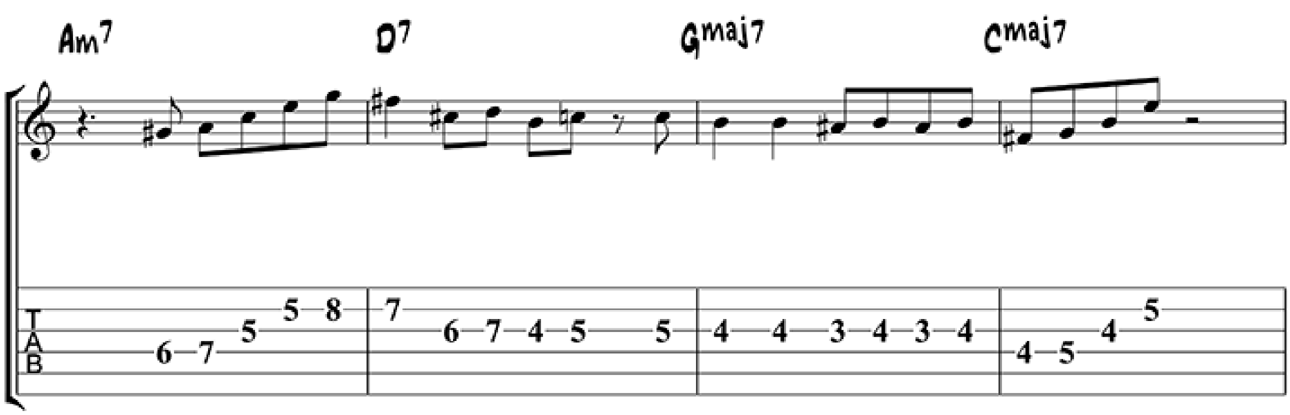


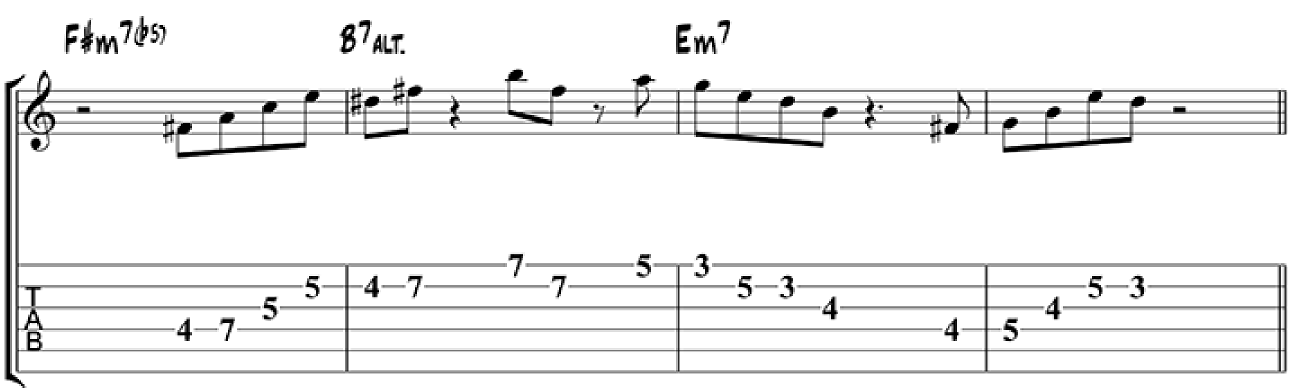
Autumn Leaves Arpeggio Study
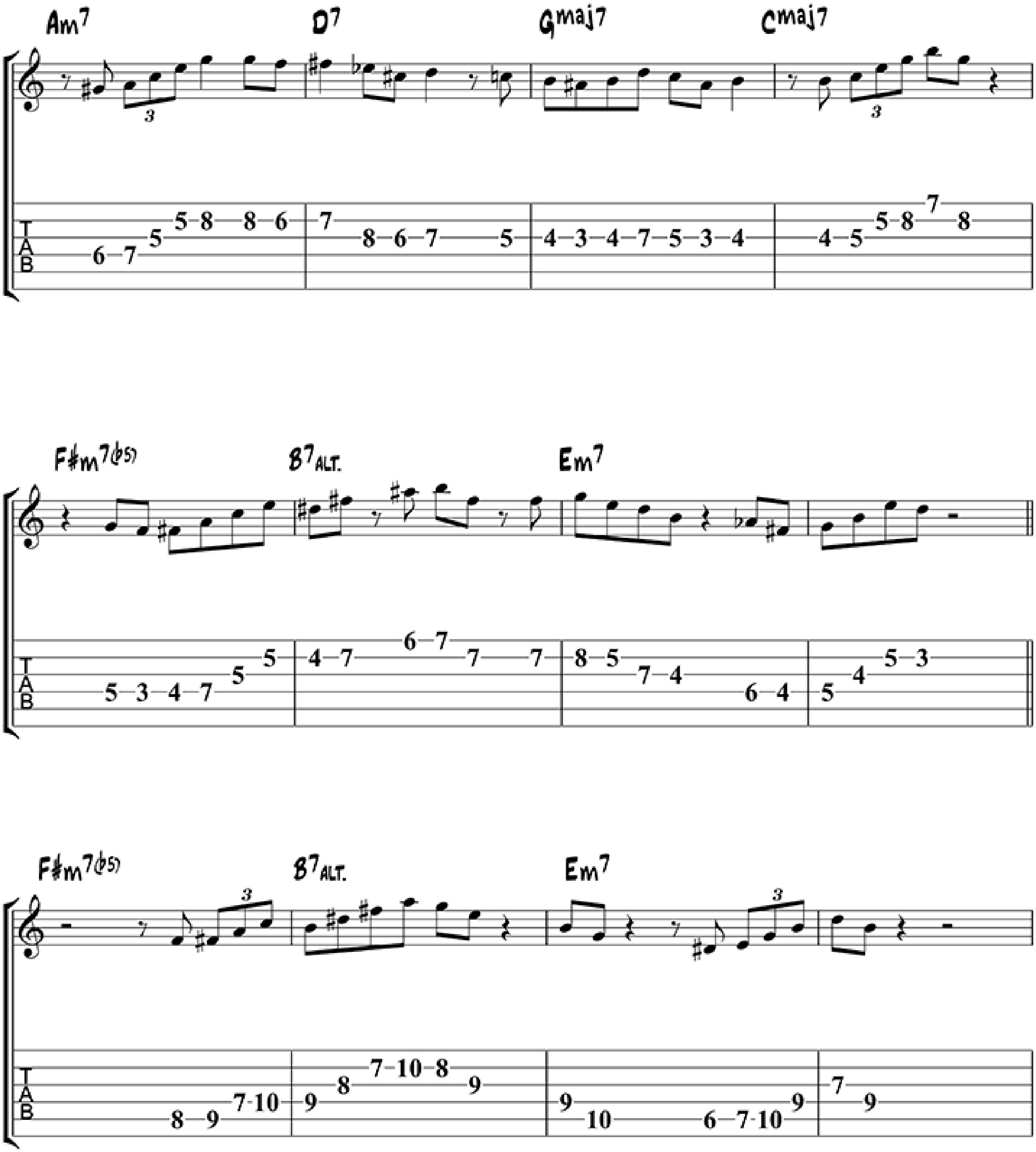
To complete our arpeggio tutorial, we will learn how to use arpeggios in a song. To get you started applying arpeggios over chord changes, here is a **solo** over Autumn Leaves that uses arpeggios and concepts from this section.
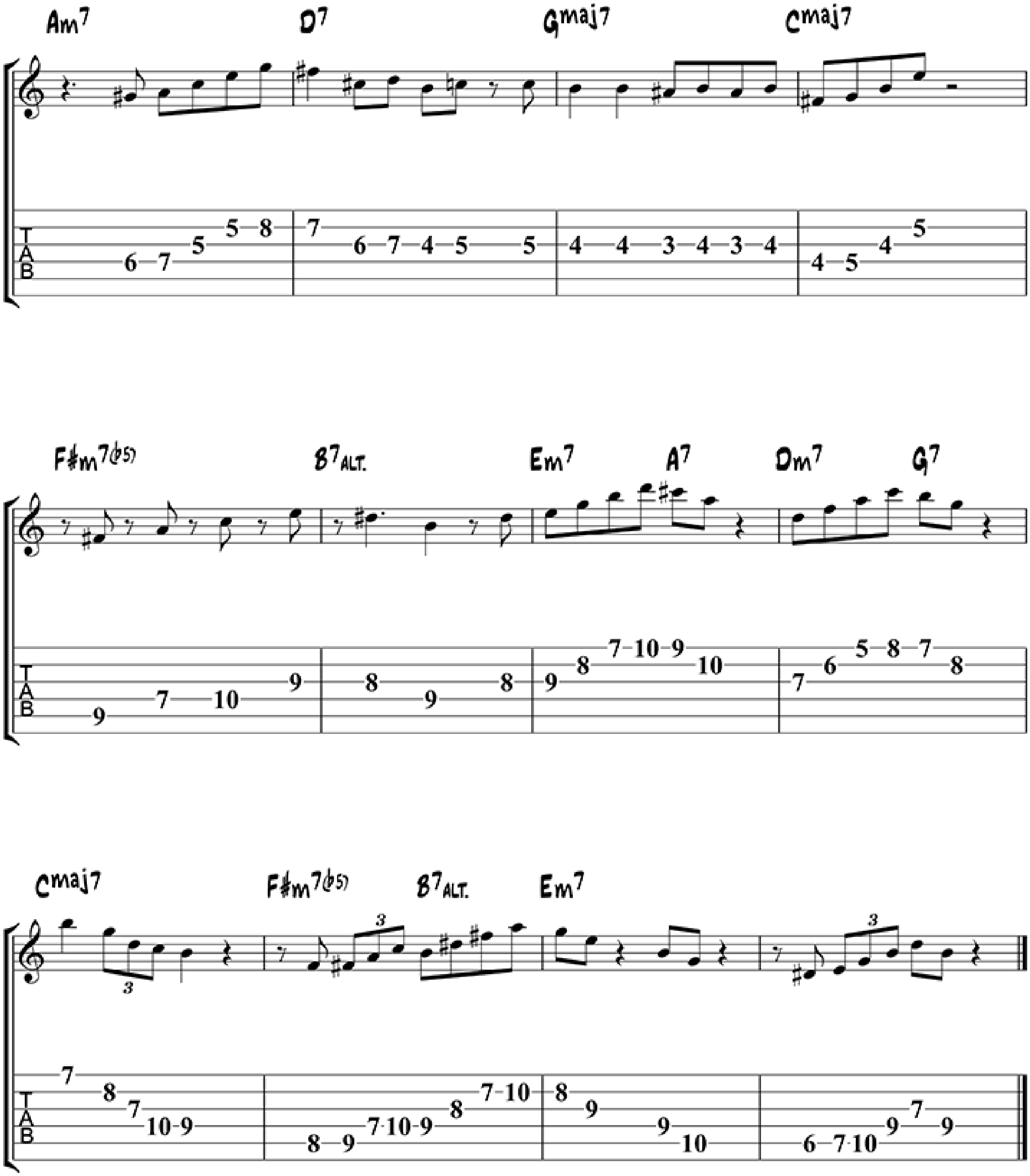
Work the solo **one phrase at a time** until you can put everything together to form the solo as a whole. From there, you can play it along with the audio example, as well as solo over the backing track as you create your own arpeggio solos over this tune.

Audio Example 34	Backing Track 2
Click here to play audio example 34	Click here to play backing track 2



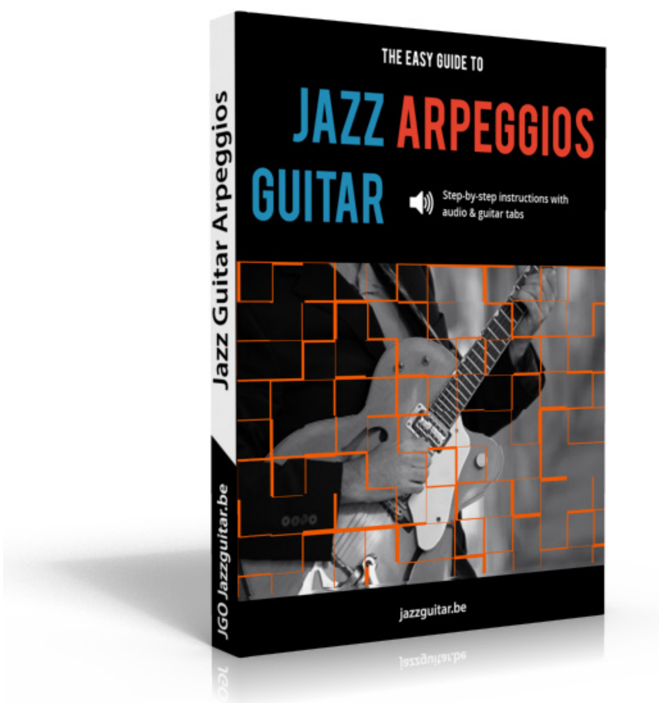



Am7
D7
Gmaj7
Cmaj7
F#m7(b5)
B7ALT.
Em7
F#m7(b5)
B7ALT.
Em7


Am7 D7 Gmaj7 Cmaj7
F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7 A7 Dm7 G7
Cmaj7 F#m7(b5) B7ALT. Em7

The Easy Guide To Jazz Guitar Arpeggios eBook

Now you have learned the basics of arpeggios. If you want to progress and learn more about how to use arpeggios in your soloing, check out our step-by-step eBook, The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Arpeggios.



A big part of learning how to play jazz guitar is learning to "**play the changes**". While learning scales is one avenue to explore playing changes, the most direct way to outline any chord in your soloing is to use arpeggios in your lines.

The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Arpeggios is a **step-by-step approach** that teaches you the fingerings, knowledge, exercises, and common phrases you need to confidently solo over any set of jazz chord changes.

When you buy *The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Arpeggios*, you get:

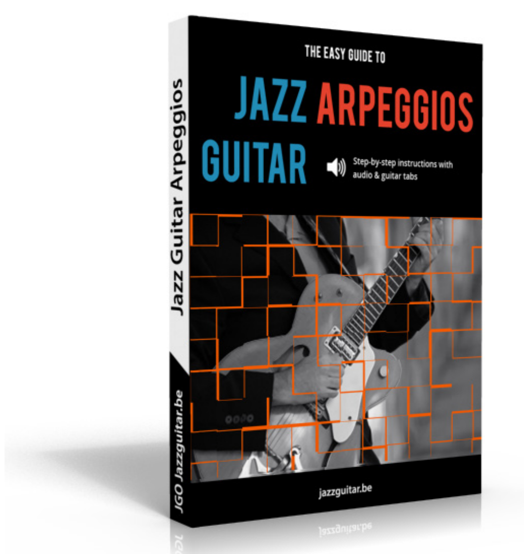
- 15 Chapters (182 pages) of must-know jazz arpeggio concepts and applications, explained step-by-step.
- Easy to follow concepts with hundreds of fretboard diagrams and tab/ notation examples.
- Over 100 audio examples and backing tracks.
- Sample solos over common jazz tunes to amp up your studies.
- Practice pointers to help you get the most out of your time in the practice room.
- Everything you need to master jazz guitar arpeggios.

Byl ★★★★★

This ebook is the most interesting approach to arpeggios I have ever seen.. some of the things we come to accidentally here and there, but it's all here.. I like that you distinguished the classical 'arpeggio' to the jazz arpeggio.. I knew there was a difference, but never made the connection.. Opens up new ideas, and shows how to blend closed and open arpeggios.. simply brilliant Matt & Dirk.. brilliant..

Thank you! exactly what I needed.. got a whole new approach to my practice routine now. john petrucci warmups and these.. awesome..

Click Here to download your copy of *The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Arpeggios*.



Chapter 4 - Jazz Guitar Scales

Moving on to another essential soloing technique: scales. The scales we'll be looking at are going to be applied to Autumn leaves, and therefore are the scales needed to solo over the changes to this tune. These aren't all the scales you need to be a great jazz guitarist, but they are part of a foundation needed to move to the next level in your solos.

Start by working each scale on it's own, then learn the **sample solo** at the end of this section to take these scales to a musical situation over Autumn Leaves.

The Major Blues Scale

The first scale is used to solo over the first four bars of Autumn Leaves, Am7-D7-Gmaj7-Cmaj7, as all chords are in the **key of G major**.

This scale has **six notes**, and is built with the following interval pattern:

G Major Blues Scale	G	A	Bb	B	D	E
	1	2	b3	3	5	6

The b3 is the "**blue**" note in this scale, as it gives the scale its bluesy sound.

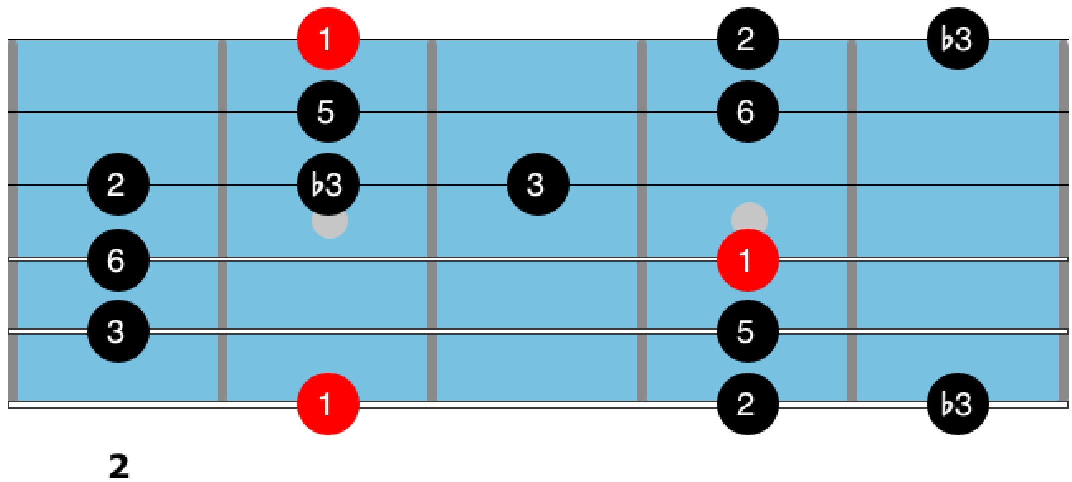
You can use this scale to solo over any progression in a major key, such as Autumn Leaves, or over individual **7th and maj7** chords. Because there is not 7th in this scale, it can be applied to both G7 and Gmaj7 chords. Pretty **cool** right?

Here are **two fingerings** to get you started:

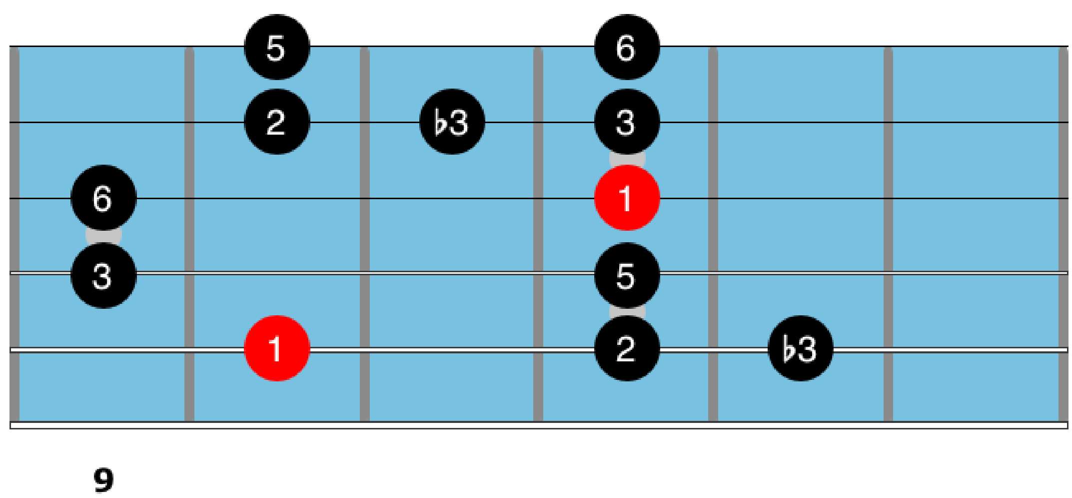
Audio Example 35

Click here to play audio example 35

G Major Blues



G Major Blues



After you have one or both of these fingerings down, put on this backing track and solo over this Gmaj7 chord with the G major blues scale.

This gets the sound of this scale into your solos in a musical situation.

Backing Track 4

Click here to play backing track 4

The Natural Minor Scale

The next scale is used to solo over the **F#m7b5 chord** in Autumn Leaves.

Because minor ii V I's (like F#m7b5-B7alt-Em7 in Autumn Leaves), use different scales over each of the 3 chords, it's best to keep them to one root note. To do this, you play three scales with the same E root over those three chords, beginning with E natural minor over F#m7b5.

This scale is the **6th mode** of the major scale, and is also called the Aeolian mode:

E Natural Minor (=Aeolian)	E	F#	G	A	B	C	D
	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7

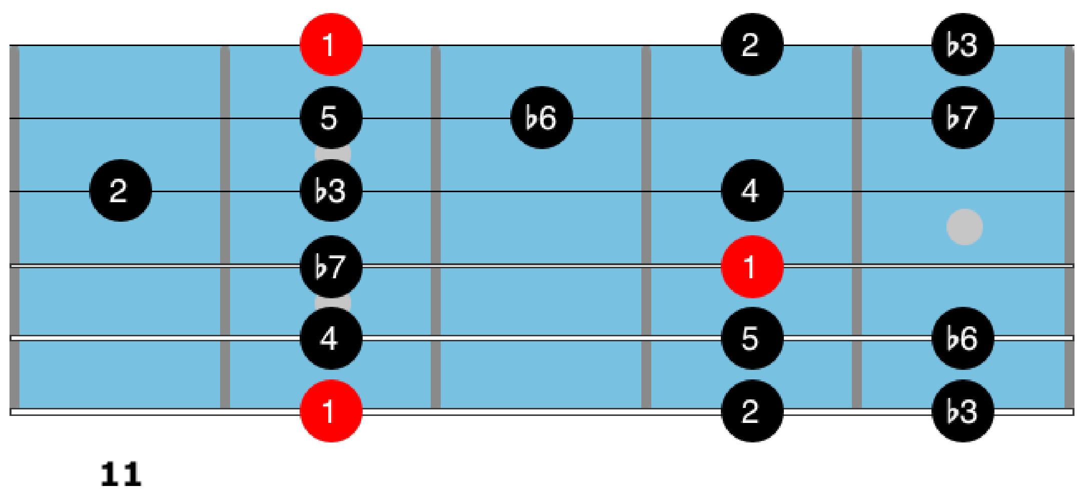
Click here to learn more about Guitar Modes

To begin, here are **two fingerings** to learn for this scale:

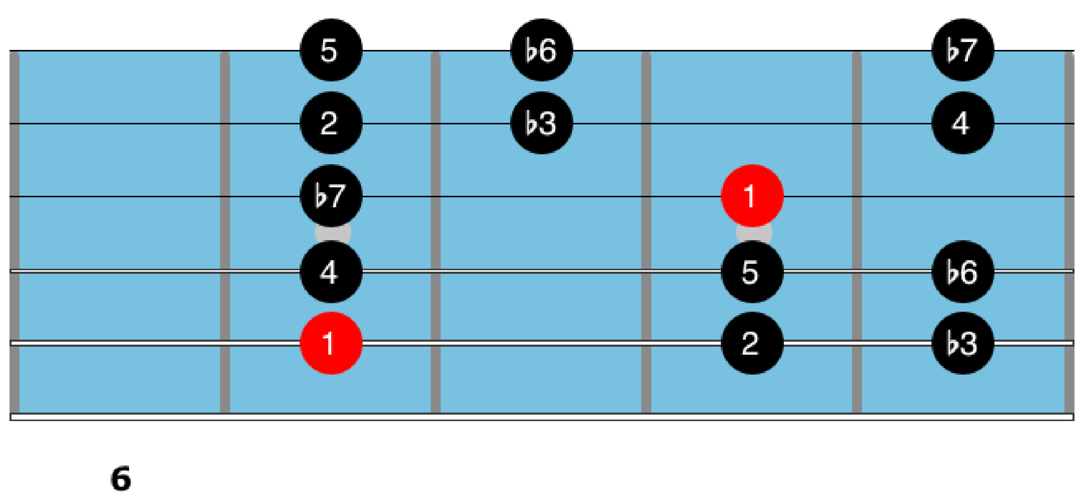
Audio Example 36

Click here to play audio example 36

E Natural Minor



E Natural Minor



After you have one or both of these fingerings down, put on this backing track and solo over this F#m7b5 chord with the E natural minor scale.

This gets the sound of this scale into your solos in a musical situation.

Backing Track 5

Click here to play backing track 5

The Harmonic Minor Scale

When soloing over the **V7alt chord** (the B7alt chord in Autumn Leaves) in a minor ii V I, you use the tonic harmonic minor scale.

Here are the notes of the harmonic minor scale. Note that the only difference with the natural minor scale is the **natural 7** instead of a flat 7:

E Harmonic Minor Scale	E	F#	G	A	B	C	D#
	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	7

When playing the E harmonic minor scal over B7alt, you create a **V7(b9,b13)** sound:

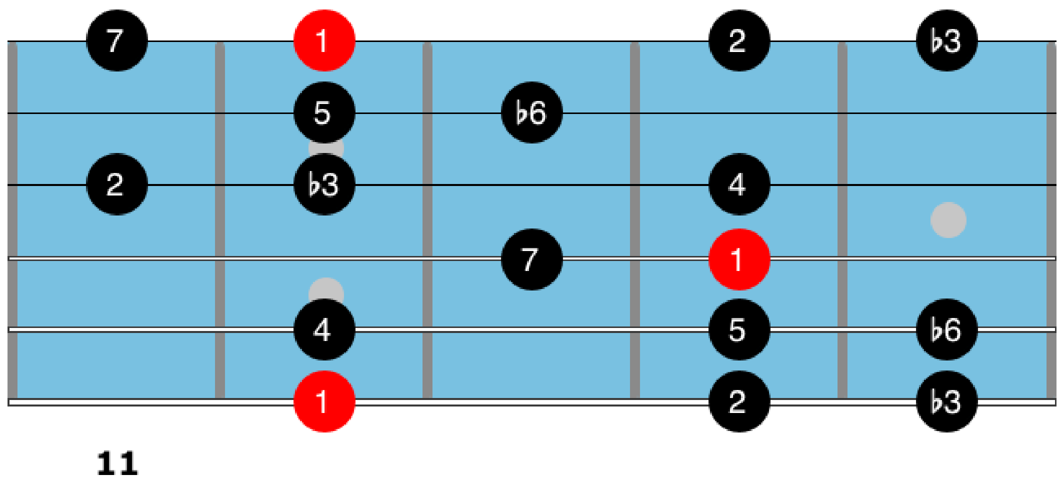
E Harmonic Minor Scale	E	F#	G	A	B	C	D#
Played over B7alt	11	5	b13	b7	1	b9	3

Here are two fingerings to get you started:

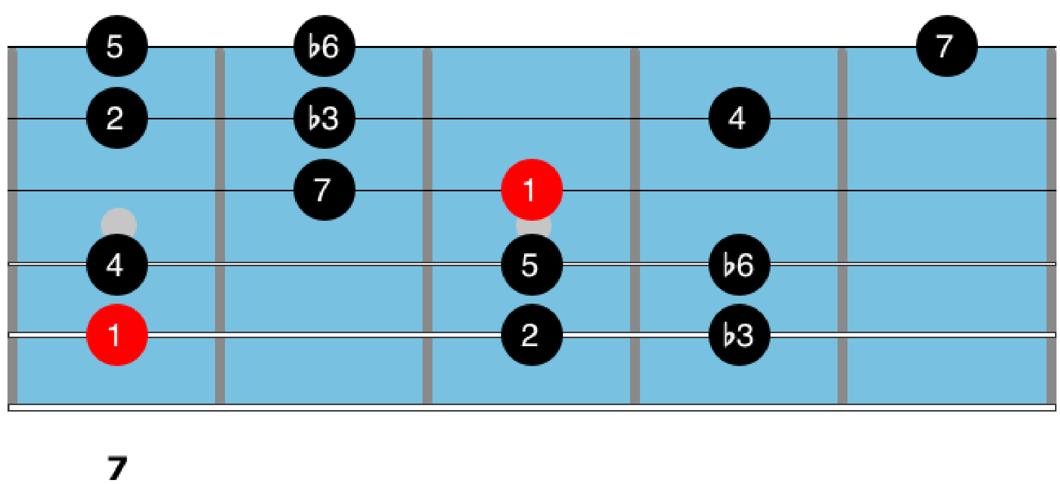
Audio Example 37

Click here to play audio example 37

E Harmonic Minor



E Harmonic Minor



After you have one or both of these fingerings down, put on this backing track and solo over this B7alt chord with the E harmonic minor scale.

This gets the sound of this scale into your solos in a musical situation.

Backing Track 6

Click here to play backing track 6

The Melodic Minor Scale

The final scale is used to solo over the Im7 chord in a minor ii V I, **melodic minor**.

This scale has a raised 7th interval, which creates **tension** over m7 chords in your solos:

E Melodic Minor Scale	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D#
	1	2	b3	4	5	6	7

Because of this tension, experiment with this scale in your solos to determine where you want to use that **raised 7th** in your lines.

A good place to start, is listening to **Grant Green's solo over So What**, where he uses melodic minor in many lines over m7 chords:

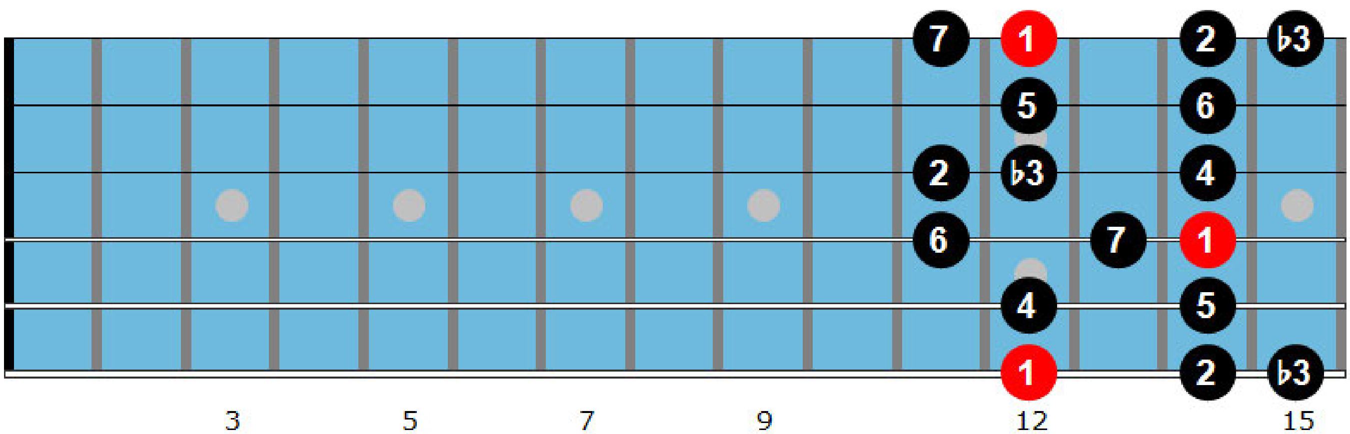


Here are **two fingerings** to get you started with the melodic minor scale:

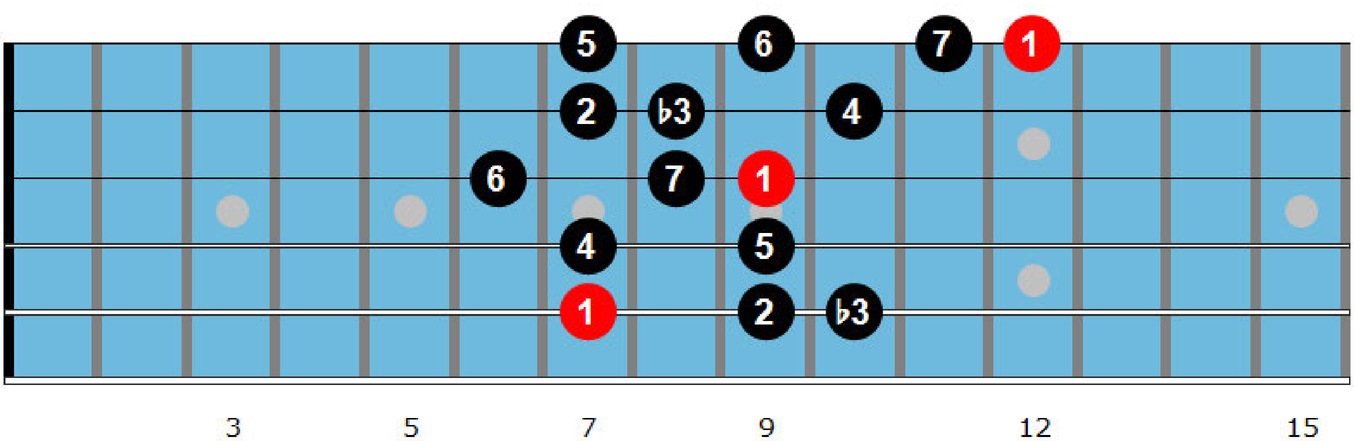
Audio Example 38

Click here to play audio example 38

E Melodic Minor



E Melodic Minor



After you have one or both of these fingerings down, put on this backing track and solo over this Em7 chord with the E melodic minor scale.

This gets the sound of this scale into your solos in a musical situation.

Backing Track 7

Click here to play backing track 7

Autumn Leaves Scale Solo

To get you started with applying scales to a **soloing situation**, here is a solo over Autumn Leaves that uses scales from this section.

Work the solo one phrase at a time until you can put **everything together** to form the solo as a whole.
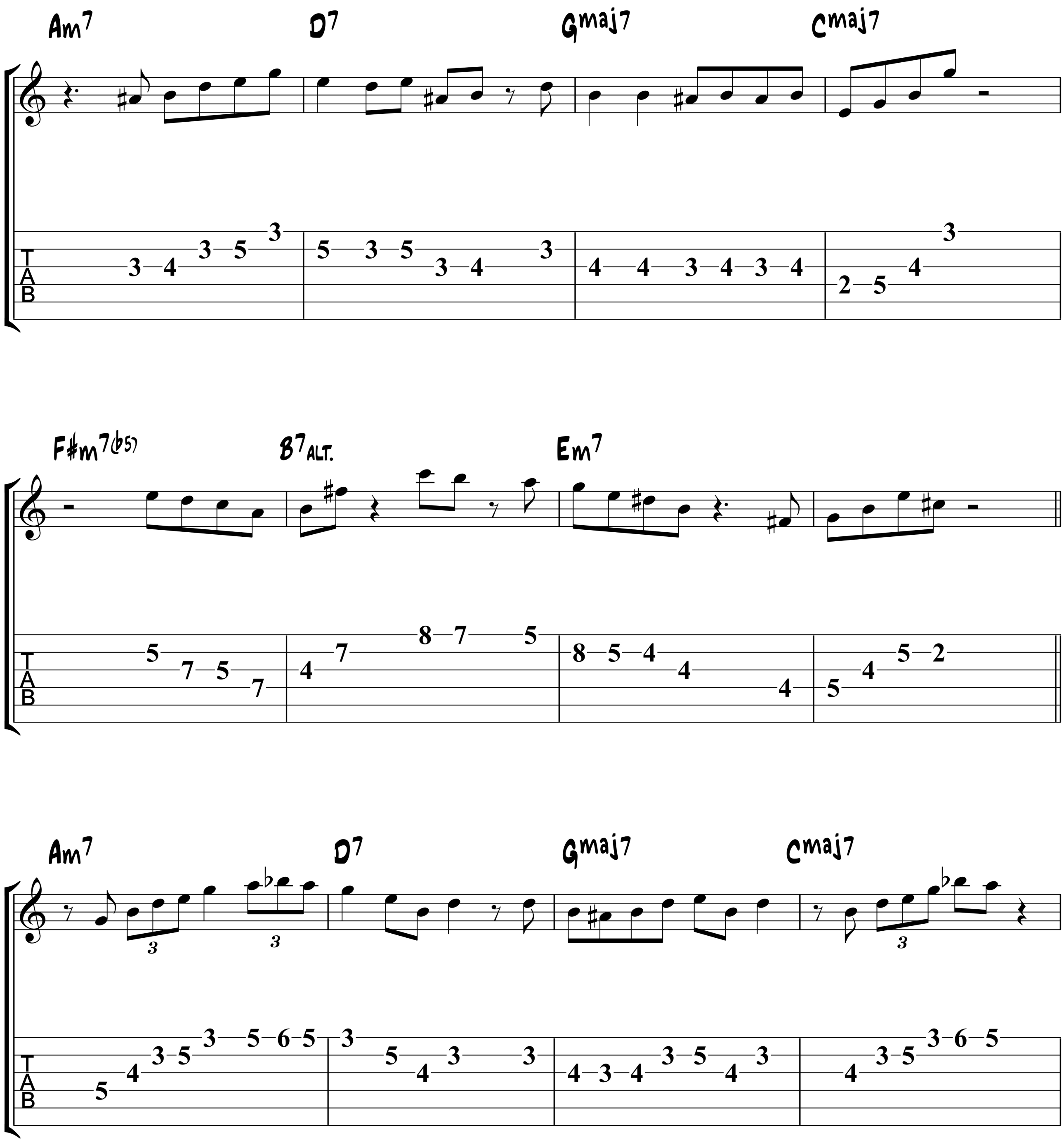
From there, you can play it along with the audio example, as well as solo over the backing track as you create your own **scale solos** over this tune.
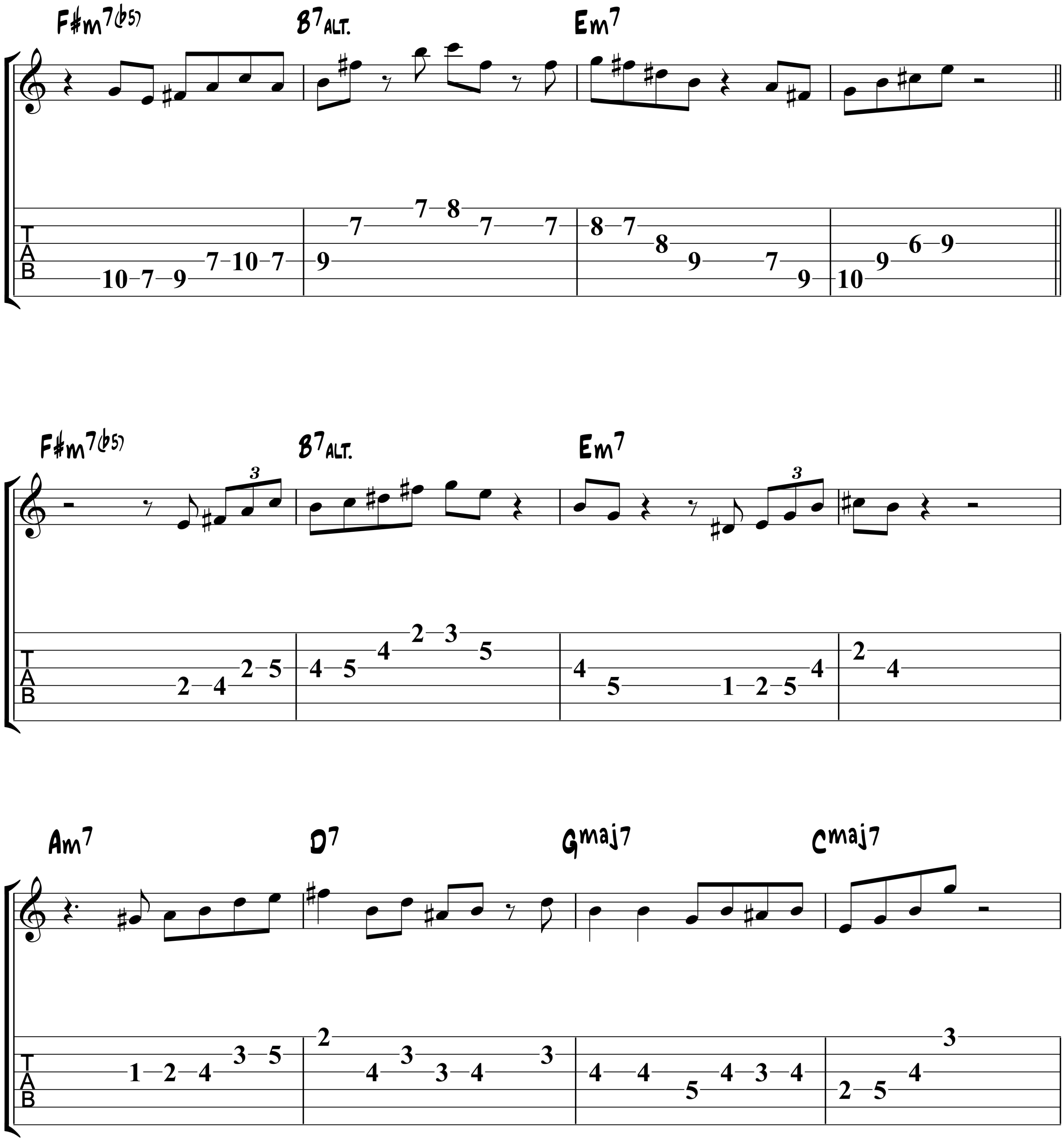
Backing Track 8

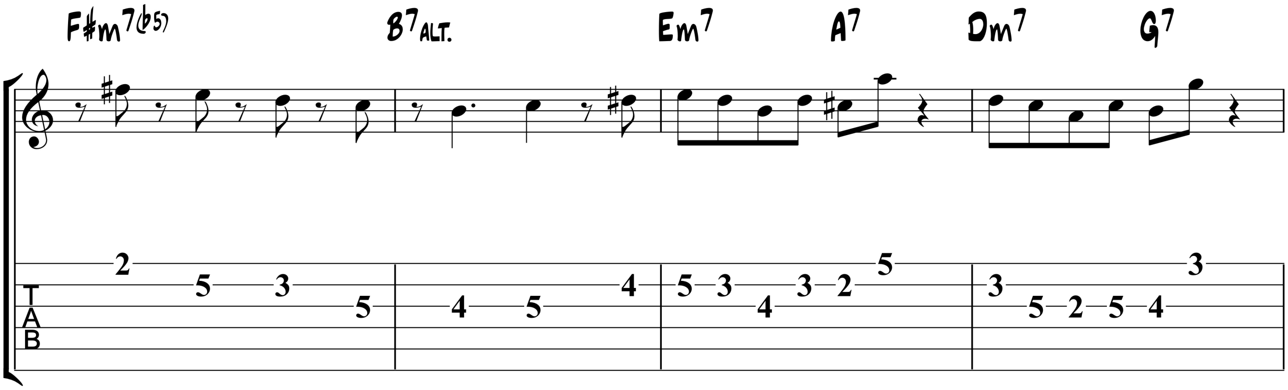
Click here to play backing track 8

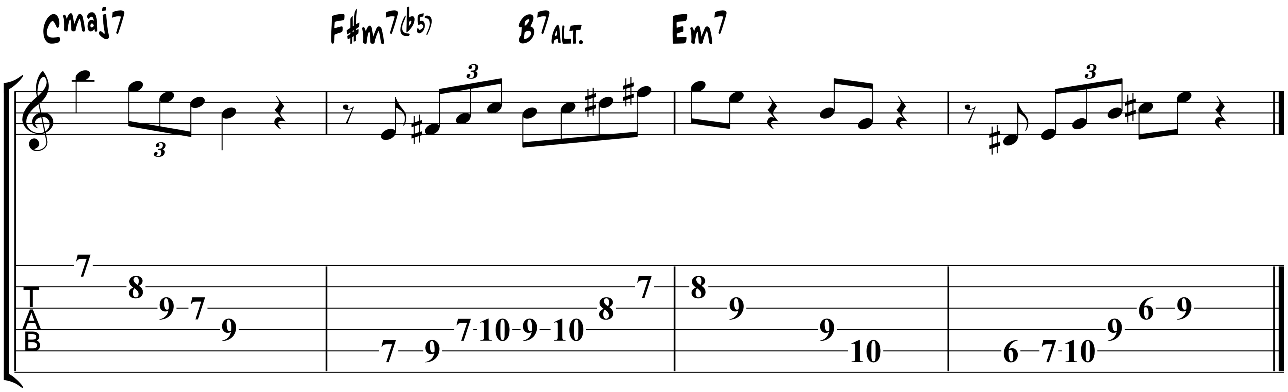
Audio Example 39

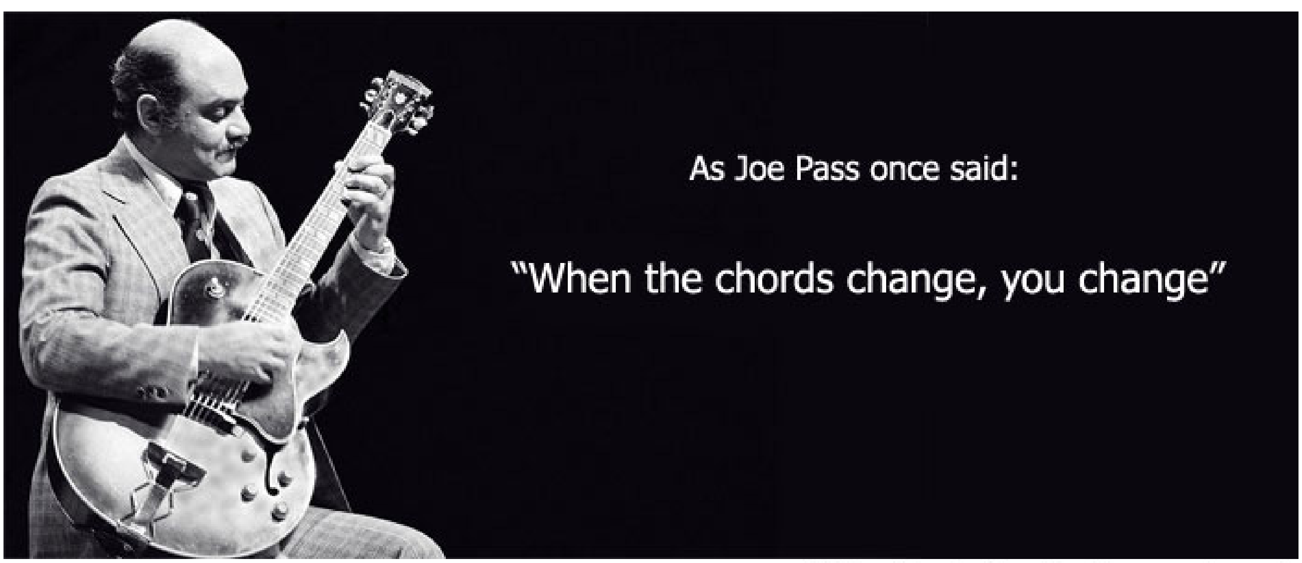
Click here to play audio example 39




F#m7(b5)
B7ALT.
Em7
F#m7(b5)
B7ALT.
Em7
Am7
D7
Gmaj7
Cmaj7


F#m7(b5)
B7 ALT.
Em7
A7
Dm7
G7


Cmaj7
F#m7(b5)
B7 ALT.
Em7


As Joe Pass once said:
"When the chords change, you change"

Chapter 5 - Jazz Guitar Licks

One of the fastest ways to bring a jazz sound to your solos is to study vocabulary, which means licks, lines, and phrases from famous recordings. While working on vocabulary is essential learning for any jazz guitarist, playing licks note-for-note in your solos can get you labeled as a “line player.”

This is someone who learns licks as played and then parrots them in their solos back to back. Not a sound you should be going for in your solos…

But, while you want to avoid being a line player, you need to have jazz vocabulary at the heart of your solos to bring an authentic jazz sound to your playing.

To do this, you learn lines, break them down into concepts, and then use those concepts to build exercises and further vocabulary in your playing.

This chapter shows you how to do that…

Each lick is presented as a whole, but **the concepts** within these licks are broken down so you understand how each line is built.

From there, you can take those concepts and use them to build your own lines when soloing over jazz tunes on the bandstand.

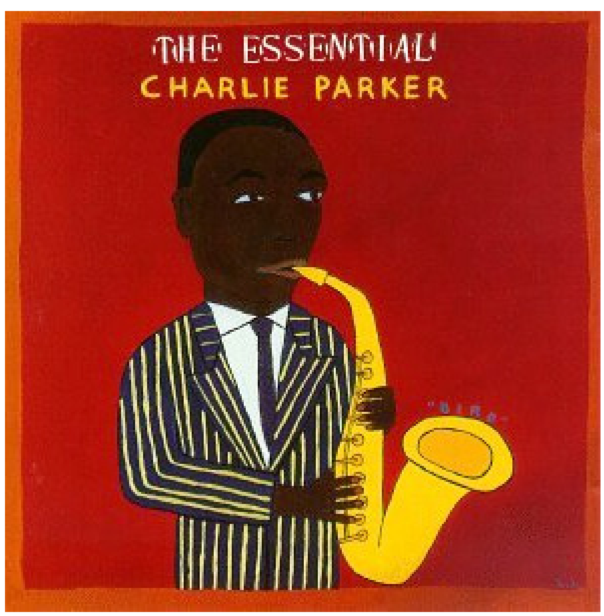
Make sure to work each lick in this section as well as dig into the concepts behind each lick to get the most out of the material in this chapter.

10 Classic Bebop Licks

Though it lasted less than a decade, the **bebop era** has had a lasting influence on subsequent generations of jazz improvisers. Players such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Clifford Brown, Bud Powell, and others brought fresh levels of excitement to their extended solos, ushering in a new era of jazz improvisation.

While many guitarists fall in love with the bebop sound, learning how to play in the bebop style can seem intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. By studying **classic licks**, and the concepts that are used to build those lines, you'll be able to bring a bebop vibe to your own jazz solos.

In this section, you'll learn **10 bebop licks**, as well as the important concepts behind each lick, so that you can build your vocabulary and expand your theory knowledge at the same time.



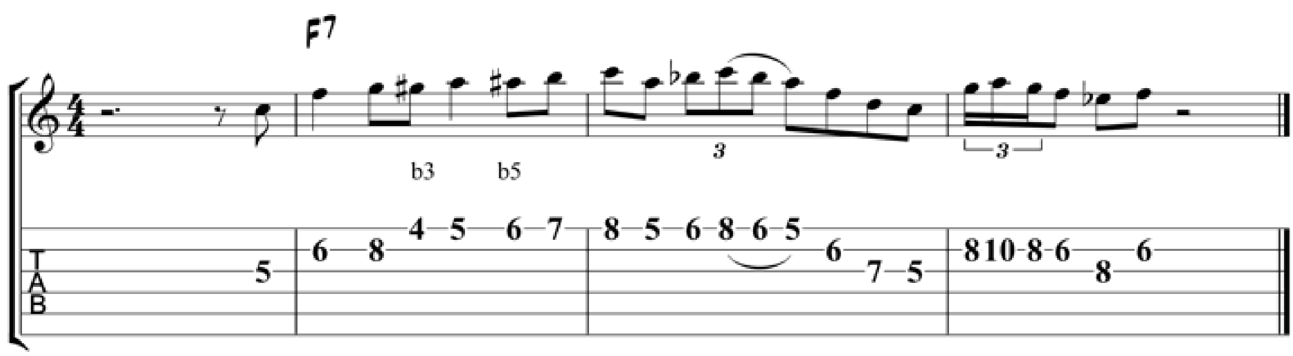
Bebop Lick 1 - Charlie Parker

The first bebop lick is from the Charlie Parker songbook, and is one of the most **popular jazz licks** of all time. This lick is so famous that if you learn just one bebop lick, it's this one.

The lick is played over the first four bars of a **jazz blues chord progression**, and features scale tones plus a few chromatic notes. These chromatic notes are known as blue notes (b3 and b5) and come from the **blues scale**, which gives the lick it's bluesy vibe.

Audio Example 40

Click here to play audio example 40



Bebop Lick 2 - Dizzy Gillespie

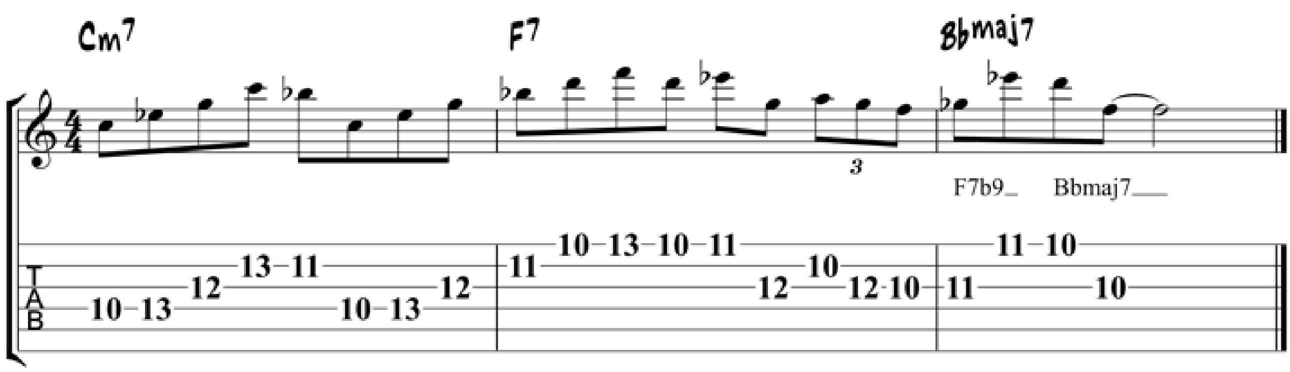
In this **Dizzy Gillespie** inspired lick, you'll see a delayed resolution over the Imaj7 chord in the third bar of the phrase. The F7 chord (specifically F7b9), is played over the first beat of the third bar, before resolving to the Bbmaj7 chord on the second beat of that bar.

As well, notice the **Cm triad** that outlines the first half of the first bar.

Though arpeggios are mostly used in jazz to outline chords, **swing and bebop** era players often used the 1-3-5 triad to outline the underlying chord. When working on soloing over bebop changes, don't forget to spend some time on triads, they'll come in handy as you use them over bebop tunes.

Audio Example 41

Click here to play audio example 41



Bebop Lick 3 - Clifford Brown

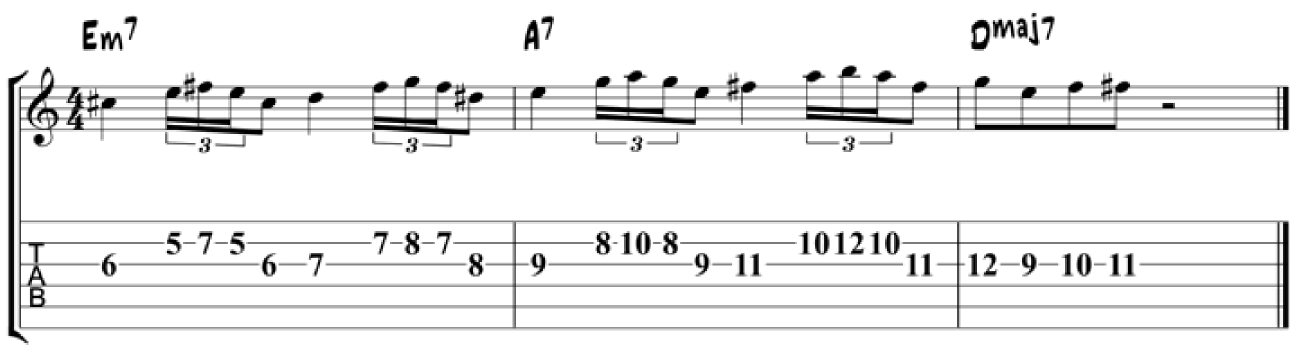
Here's a lick from Clifford Brown that outlines a ii V I progression in the key of D major.

The repetitive **triplet pattern** in the first two bars is characteristic of Clifford's playing, and the bebop era in general.

As well, notice the four notes played over Dmaj7, which when combined are a popular **bebop pattern** in their own right. Take that last phrase (G-E-F-F#), and practice applying it to other musical situations.

Audio Example 42

Click here to play audio example 42
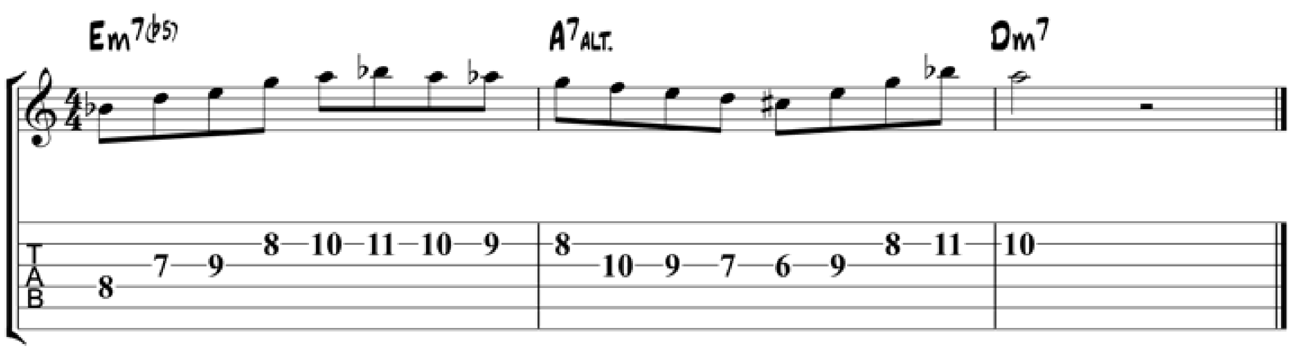


Bebop Lick 4 - Clifford Brown

Another Clifford Brown lick, here you'll see the phrygian dominant scale being used to solo over the A7alt chord.

The scale actually begins in the second half of the first bar, on the note A, and uses the **fifth mode of harmonic minor** to create a typical bebop run over the next 6 beats. When soloing in the bebop style, the phrygian dominant scale is a first-choice sound when improvising over V7 and V7alt chords in your lines.

Audio Example 43

Click here to play audio example 43



Bebop Lick 5 - John Coltrane

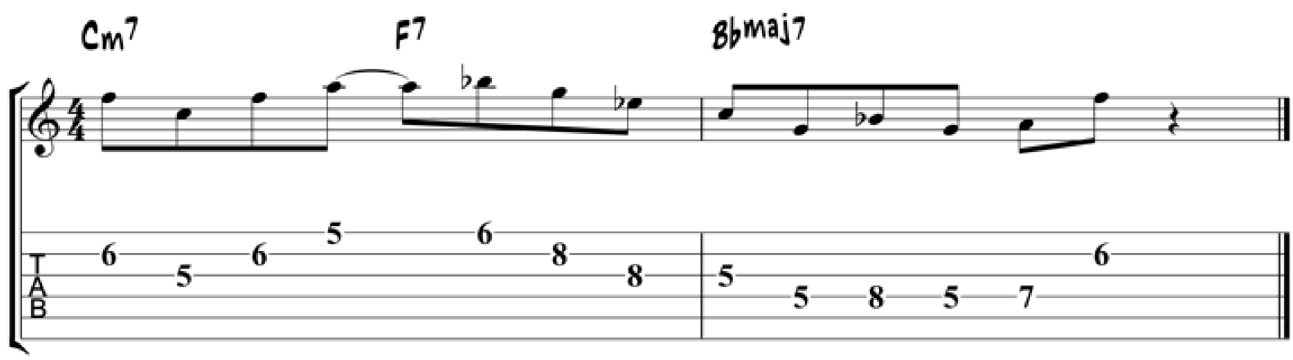
A short ii V I lick, this phrase comes from John Coltrane, and uses **diatonic notes** in the bebop style.

When playing over bebop tunes, you don't always have to use chromatic notes to outline the changes. Sometimes a carefully played **diatonic run**, such as this, is exactly what the tune needs at that moment in time.

Having a handful of diatonic lines in your vocabulary will ensure you're able to mix them in comfortably with the **chromatic lines** in your repertoire.

Audio Example 44

Click here to play audio example 44



Bebop Lick 6 - ii V I

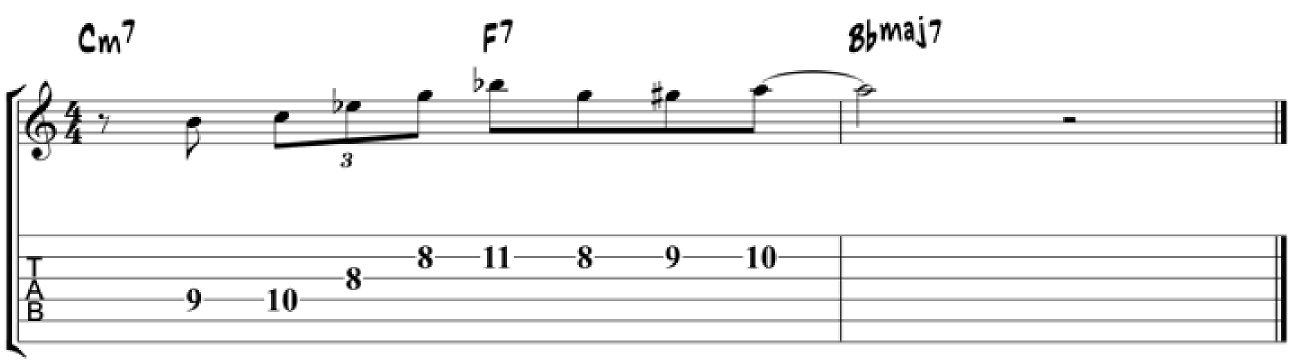
Another short **ii V I lick**, this line has been played by countless jazz musicians over the year. Because of it's popularity, it's another must-know bebop lick to add to your soloing vocabulary.

The lick starts with a **leading tone** (B), before running up the iim7 arpeggio.

Then, the line ends with the same **four-note pattern** that you saw at the end of the Clifford Brown line. Here, the lick starts on the root of the key (Bb) and the runs chromatically up to the 7th (A).

Audio Example 45

Click here to play audio example 45



Bebop Lick 7 - minor ii V I

Here's a classic minor ii V I bebop lick that uses an **F#dim7 arpeggio** over the D7alt chord.

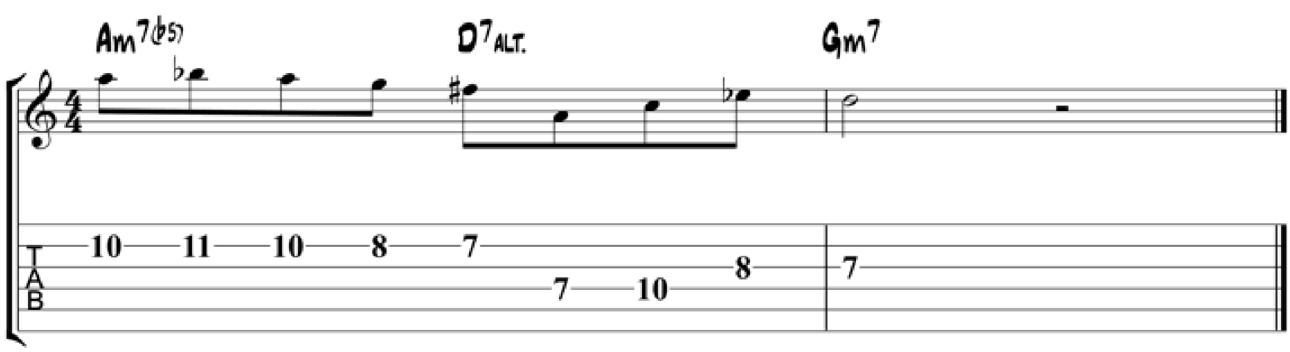
When playing a dim7 arpeggio from the 3rd of any 7th chord, you'll outline the 3-5-b7-b9 intervals of that chord:

F#dim7 arpeggio	F#	A	C	Eb
Played over D7alt	3	5	b7	b9

This is called a **3 to 9 arpeggio**, an essential learning for any bebop guitarist.

Audio Example 46

Click here to play audio example 46



Bebop Lick 8 - Joe Pass

In this bebop lick in the style of Joe Pass, there's a tritone substitution being used to outline the V7 chord in bar two of the phrase.

When soloing over ii V I changes, you can use the progression ii bII7 I to bring a tritone substitution sound into your solos.

> The basic application of a tritone sub is to take any 7th chord you see and play another 7th chord that occurs a tritone (#4 aka b5) away from that initial chord.

For example: playing F#7 over C7. The reason that this sub works is that 7th chords with a bass note a tritone apart share the same 3rd and 7th:

C7 (original chord)	C	E	G	Bb
F#7 (tritone sub)	F#	A#	C#	E

As you can see:

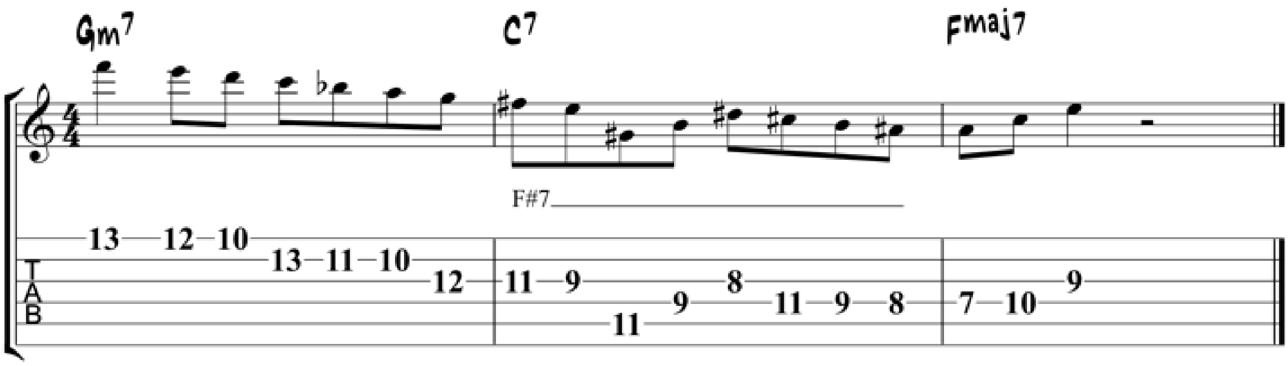
- The 3rd of C7 (E) is the same as the b7 of F#7 (E).
- The b7 of C7 (Bb) is the same as the 3rd of F#7 (A#=Bb).

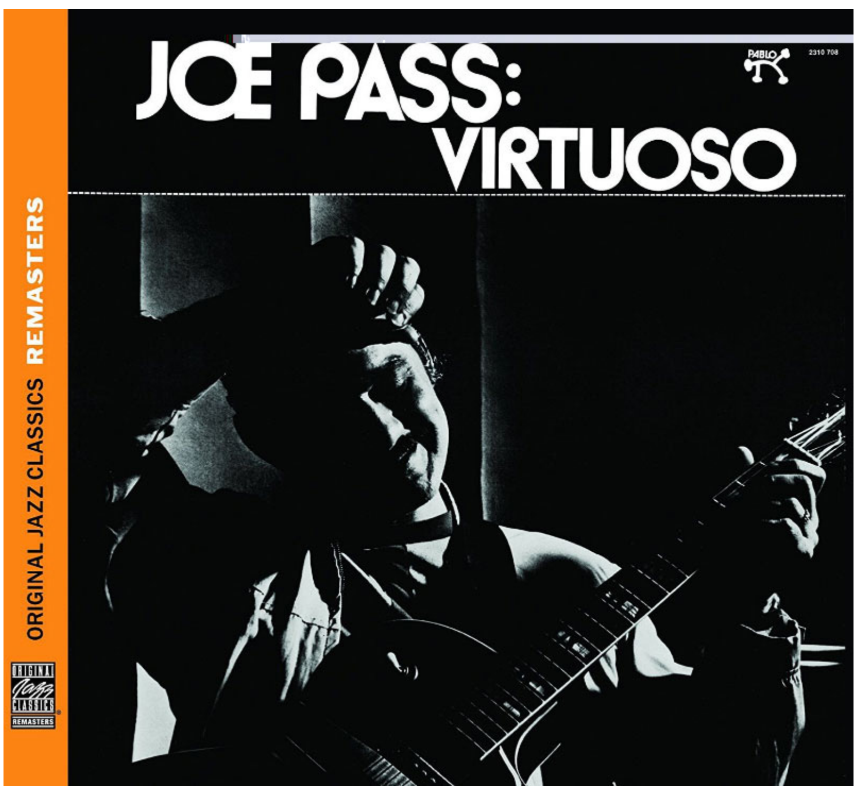
This is glue that holds the two tritone sub chords together.

Tritone subs create **added tension** to the V7 chord in your lines, tension that you'll resolve into the next bar of the lick. Letting tension hang can cause your line to sound like a mistake, but if you resolve that tension properly, this can be an effective improvisational tool.

Audio Example 47

Click here to play audio example 47





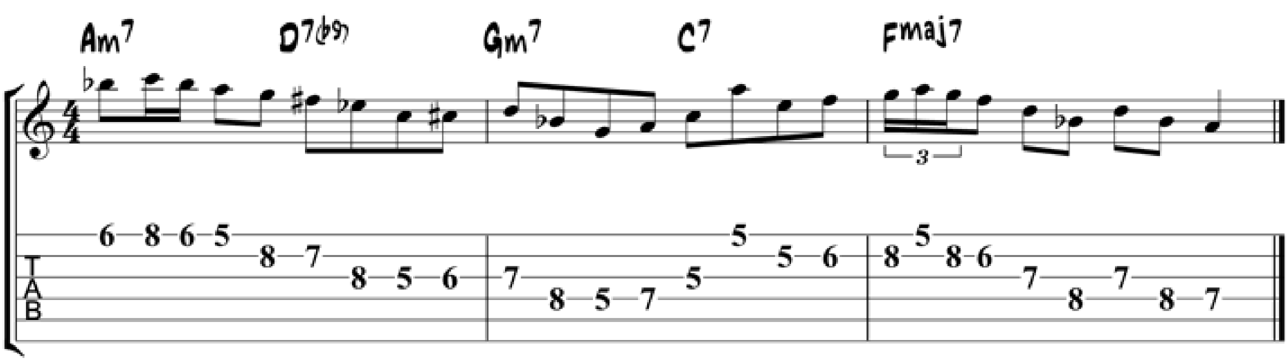
Bebop Licks 9 - Charlie Parker

In this Charlie Parker lick, you're outlining a iii VI ii V I chord progression in the key of F major.

- Notice the **b9** being used to create tension over the D7 chord, which is a common bebop technique.
- As well, the jump from the **C to A over C7** is characteristic of the bebop sound. Larger leaps can be found in the playing of Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Clifford Brown, and other great bebop soloists, and it's something you can add to your playing as well.

Audio Example 48

Click here to play audio example 48



Bebop Lick 10 - Minor ii V I
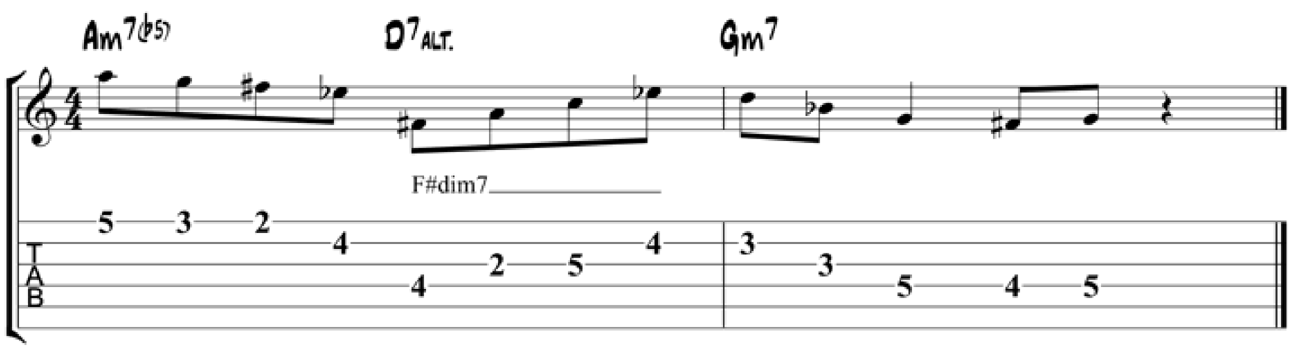
This final bebop lick outlines a **minor ii V I** chord progression.

Again, there's an **F#dim7 arpeggio** outlining the V7alt chord as well as a **major 7 interval** leading to the tonic in the second bar.

The major 7th, either in an arpeggio or from the melodic minor scale, was a popular note choice over minor chords in the bebop era. Because of this, adding the **raised 7th** to your minor soloing lines can help bring out a bebop sound in your playing.

Audio Example 49

Click here to play audio example 49



Jazz Blues Licks

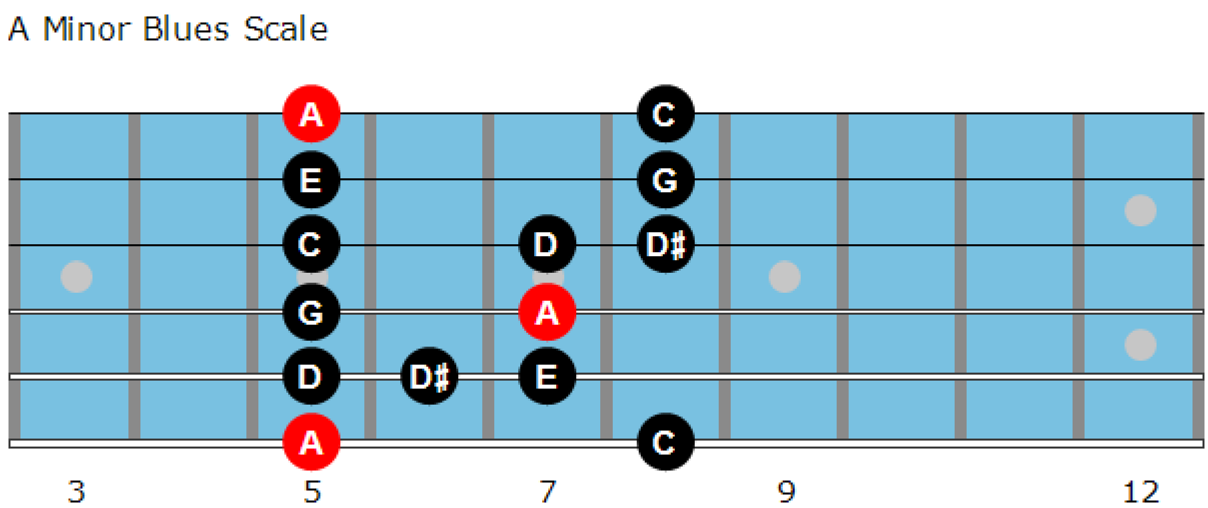
Learning to play jazz guitar means learning how to tackle the jazz blues form, jazz blues phrases and bringing a bit of bluesy flavor to your improvisations over standard tunes as well.

While you may be familiar with how to apply the blues scale and get a blues sound in your rock and blues solos, bringing out **the bluesy side of jazz might seem a bit tougher**, as jazz guitarists often branch out beyond the minor blues scale in their jazz blues soloing ideas.

In this lesson, you'll learn **5 different ways to bring out a bluesy sound** playing over dominant 7th chords. Each of these techniques can then be worked further in the woodshed and applied to a variety of musical situations.

Jazz Blues Lick 1

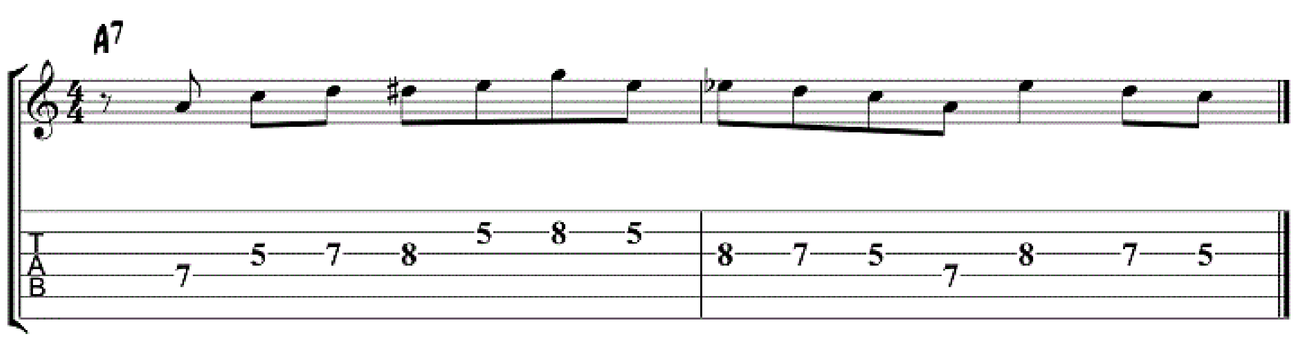
The first jazz blues lick in this lesson uses the **A Minor Blues Scale** to create an ascending and then descending line over an A7 chord.



Used in rock and blues, the minor pentatonic scale is also a staple of the jazz guitar sound, we just use it with **less bends** and with a bit of jazz flavor added to it. This lick will give you a taste of how jazz guitarists use this common scale to create jazz blues licks and solos on guitar.

Audio Example 50

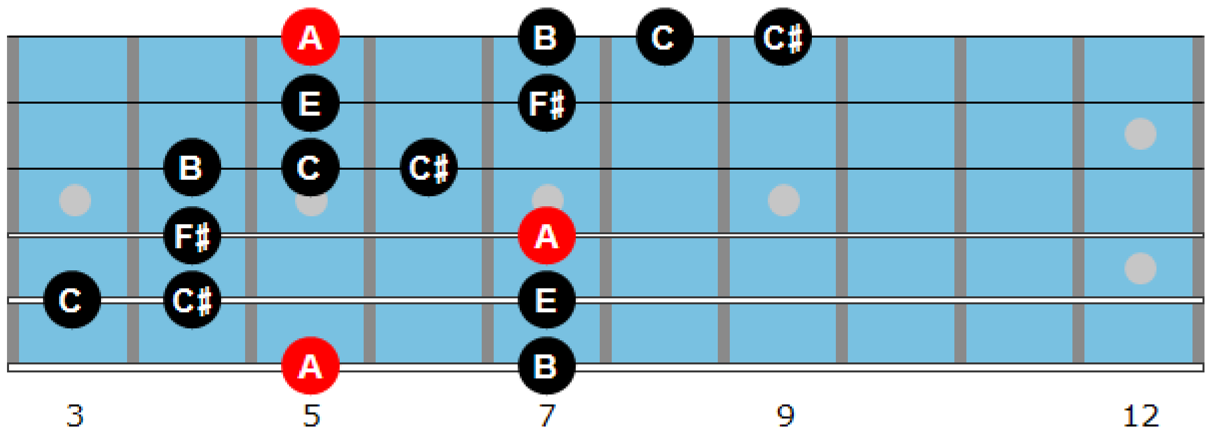
Click here to play audio example 50



Jazz Blues Lick 2

We also use the **major blues scale** to create bluesy phrases over jazz chord progressions.

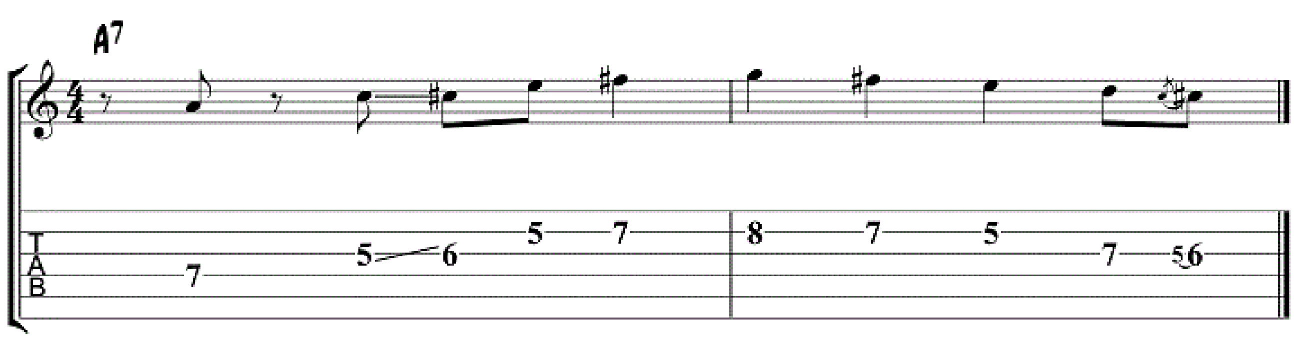
A Major Blues Scale



This lick uses the A major blues scale to create a line over an A7 chord, with the b7 (G) thrown in at the top for good measure. Notice the **slides and slurs** in this lick, which can be just as important when getting a jazz sound over the blues as the notes themselves.

Audio Example 51

Click here to play audio example 51



Jazz Blues Lick 3

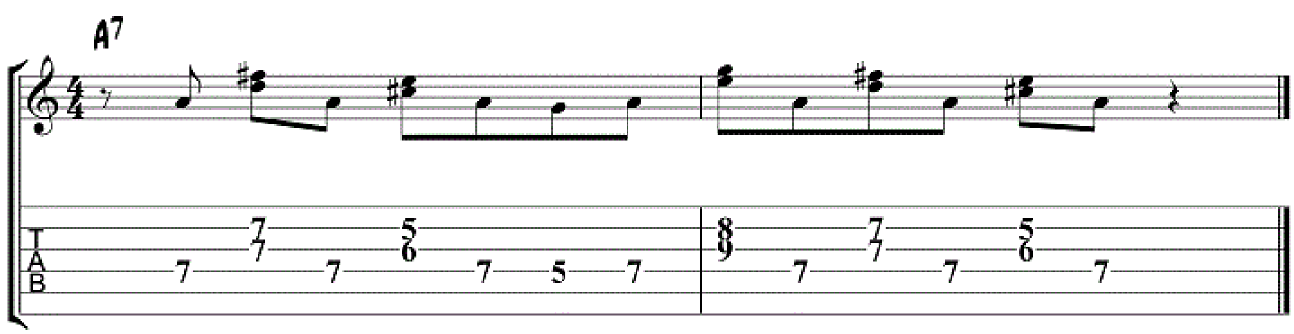
Besides playing single-note soloing ideas in a jazz blues context, you can also expand your soloing by exploring **double stops**.

> A double stop means playing 2 notes at once.

This phrase is built from the **A mixolydian mode**, the mode most associated with the dominant 7th chord sound, and uses double stops on top of an A pedal. This technique, playing double stops on top of a root note, is common practice and so is worth exploring further.

Audio Example 52

Click here to play audio example 52



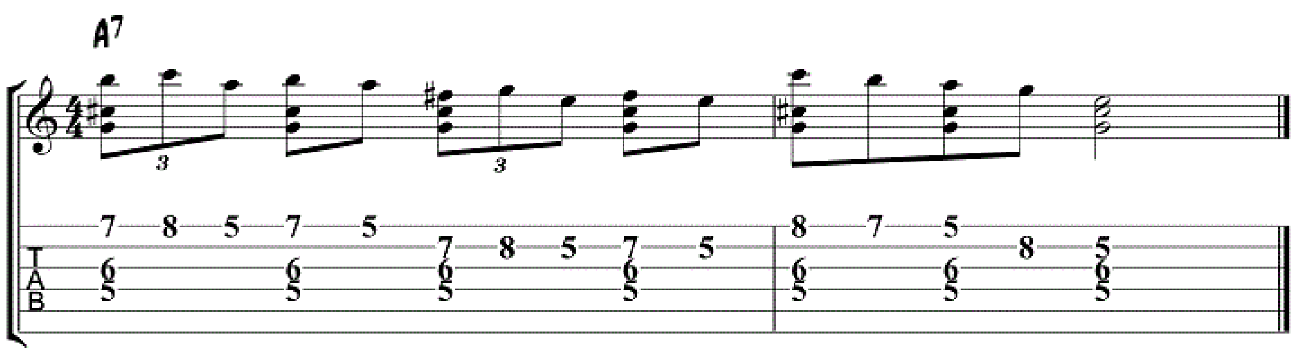
Jazz Blues Lick 4

If you are a fan of Wes Montgomery, George Benson or Kenny Burrell, then you are probably familiar with their **legendary chord solos** in the jazz blues style.

This jazz blues lick explores **adding notes on top of the 3rd and 7th of each chord** in order to build a smooth and funky sounding chord lick. The toughest part of this lick is to get the notes on top of the chords to ring over the lower notes for their full duration, so take your time and work each bar separately before bringing them all together.

Audio Example 53

Click here to play audio example 53



Jazz Blues Lick 5

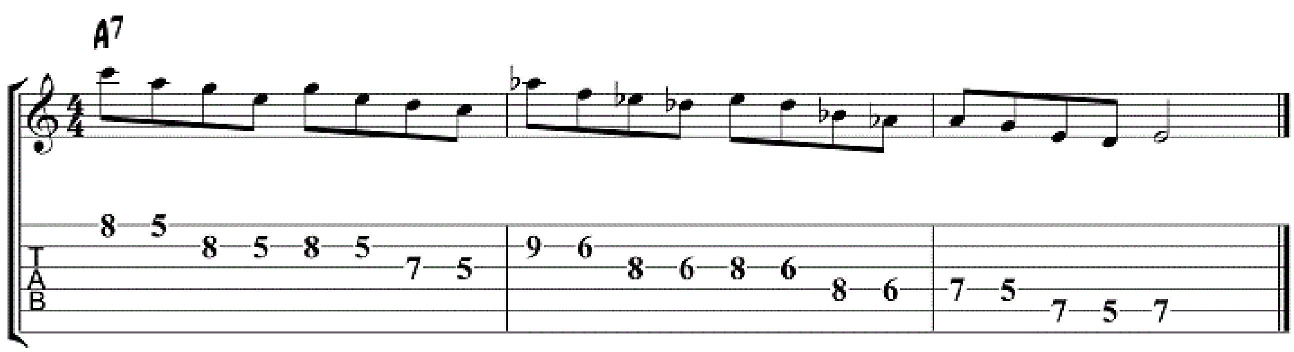
Here's an example of a **modern jazz approach** to the jazz blues sound. Using a technique called side stepping.

This lick is built by playing the A minor pentatonic in bar one, the Bb minor pentatonic in bar two, before resolving back to the A minor pentatonic in bar three.

Playing between two minor pentatonic scales over a 7th chord, **a 1/2 step apart**, is a fun and cool way to bring a modern vibe to your jazz blues solos. If you are a fan of modern jazz, you should take this approach further in your practicing as it is a key component to the modern jazz vocabulary.

Audio Example 54

Click here to play audio example 54



Charlie Christian Licks

Charlie Christian was the **first successful electric guitarist** and although he played in swing bands mostly, he was very much influenced by bebop players.

He was a student of **Eddie Durham** - a jazz guitarist who invented the amplified guitar - and was one of the first guitarist who played amplified. Electric guitar opened up a range of possibilities because guitarists could concentrate on other things besides volume.

Unfortunately Charlie Christian died at the early age of 25 after contracting tuberculosis.

- **Recommended listening**: Charlie Christian: the Genius of the Electric Guitar
- **Biography:** Charlie Christian Biography
- **Gear**: Charlie Christian's Guitar Gear



Charlie Christian Lick 1

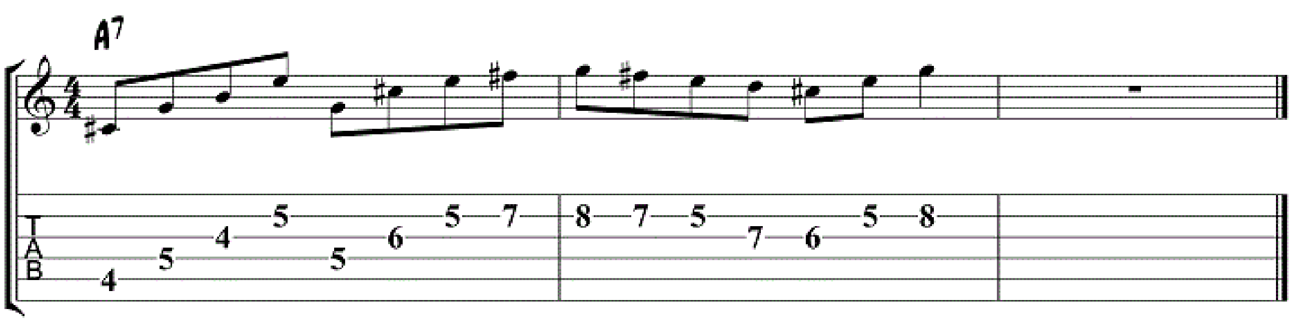
This typical Charlie Christian lick is played over A7. The first 4 notes form a **C#m7b5 chord shape**, a common substitute for the A7 chord. It gives us the 3, 5, b7 and 9 of A7:

C#m7b5	C#	E	G	B
Played over A7	3	5	b7	9

Licks like these are nice to play on a B section of a rhythm changes.

Audio Example 55

Click here to play audio example 55



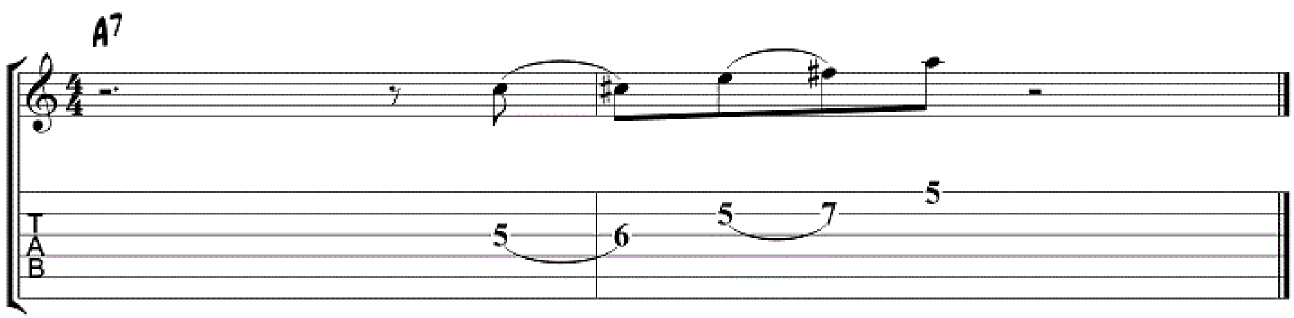
Charlie Christian Lick 2

In this classic Christian sounding lick, the **major blues scale** is being used to outline an A7 chord, producing a bluesy, swing-sounding lick.

Using the major blues scale (the major pentatonic scale with an added b3) is a great way to bring a Christian and swing sound to your lines, so feel free to explore this idea further as you take it past the context of this single lick in your practice routine.

Audio Example 56

Click here to play audio example 56



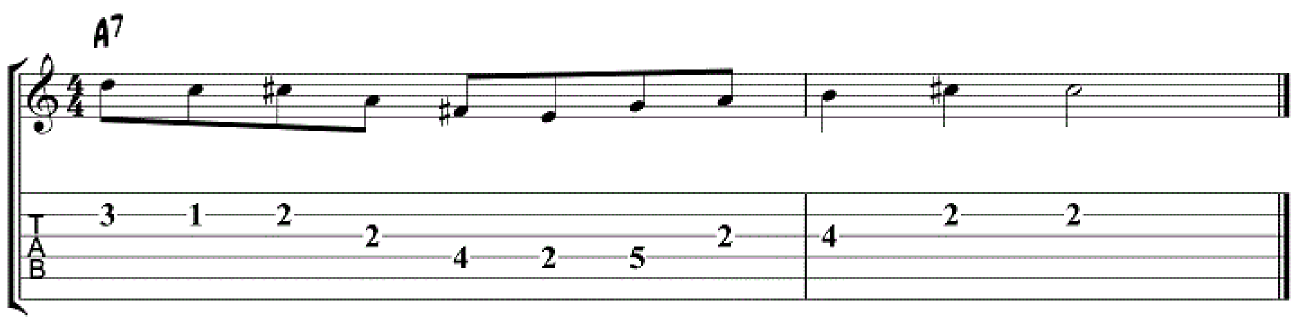
Charlie Christian Lick 3

Here you see an **enclosure** over the 3rd of the underlying A7 chord, where D and C and being used to enclose the note C. This type of tension and release line (aka enclosure) is something that can be found in many of Charlie's and other solos from the Swing era.

Enclosures have been used by just about every great jazz soloist over the past 80 or so years, and so it is an important concept to have under your fingers and in your ears as you advance your jazz guitar skills.

Audio Example 57

Click here to play audio example 57



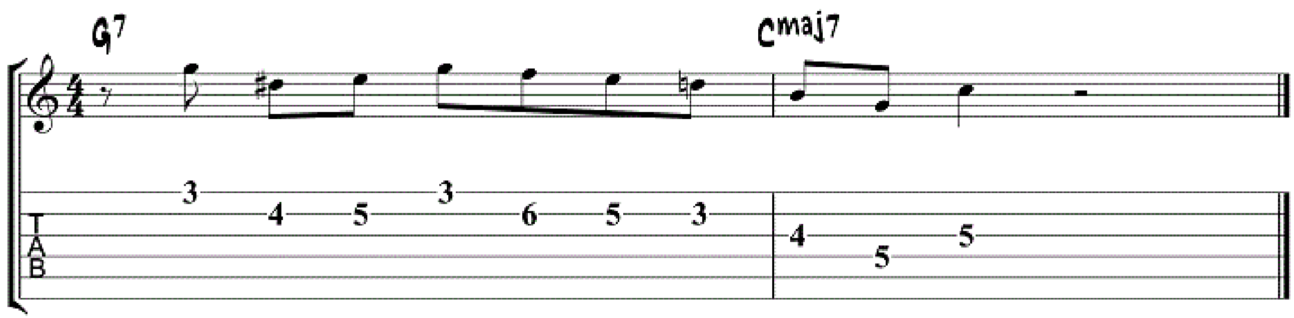
Charlie Christian Lick 4

This Charlie Christian inspired lick looks at the use of a **lower neighbor tone** in the first bar to highlight the large leap between the 9th (A) and the 13th (E) of the G7 chord.

By landing on a chromatic note after a leap, before resolving it to a chord tone on the next note, you can bring a strong focus to both the leap and the resolution point in your lines, something that Charlie and other swing musicians liked to do in their solos.

Audio Example 58

Click here to play audio example 58



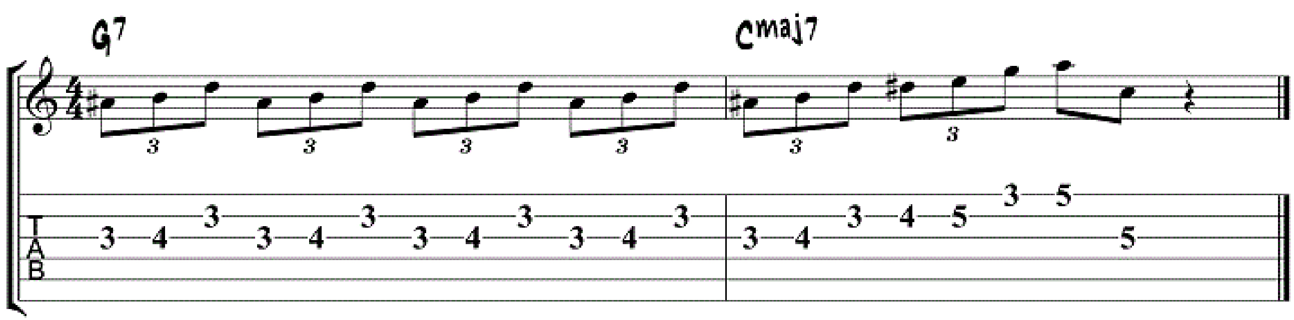
Charlie Christian Lick 5

This Charlie Christian lick uses an idiomatic riff that runs from the b3 to the 3 to the 5th of the underlying chord, in this case G7 and Cmaj7. Mixing the **blue note** (b3) with the diatonic 3rd and 5th of any chord is something that Charlie and many other Swing artists like to do in their soloing lines and phrases.

There is no bigger name in jazz guitar than Charlie Christian, and if you study the licks of only one player, Charlie's are it.

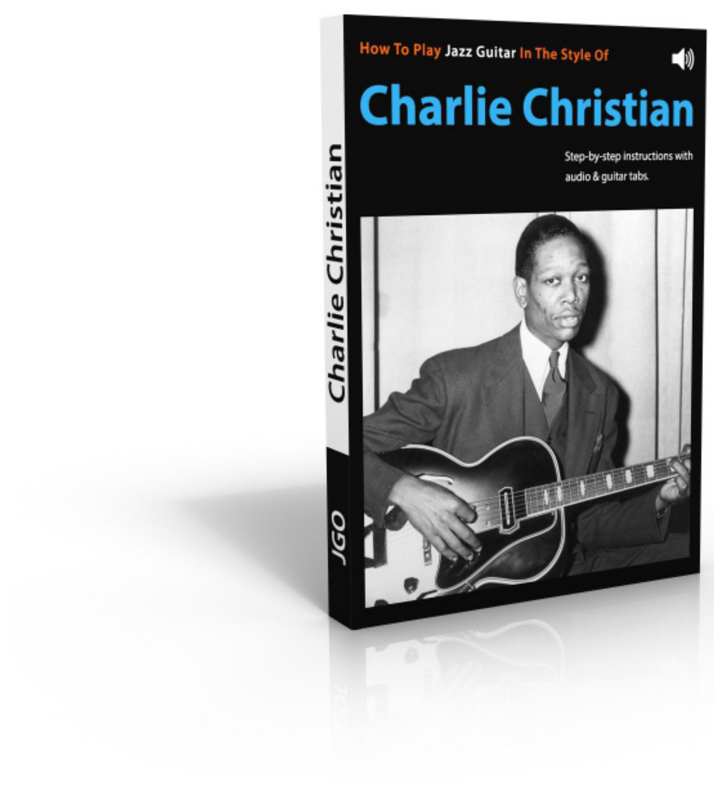
Audio Example 59

Click here to play audio example 59



How to Play in the Style of Charlie Christian eBook

Because of his electrifying solos, innovative performances, and groundbreaking concepts, Charlie Christian is one of the most popular guitarists to study when learning jazz guitar. In this eBook, you'll break down and learn the concepts behind Christian's solos, dozens of lines in his playing style, and full solos over Christian's favorite jazz standards: How to Play in the Style of Charlie Christian.



By working on the material in this eBook, you'll not only get classic Christian lines under your fingers, you'll **understand the concepts** behind his playing, so you can apply those ideas to any musical situation.comping over standards in no time.

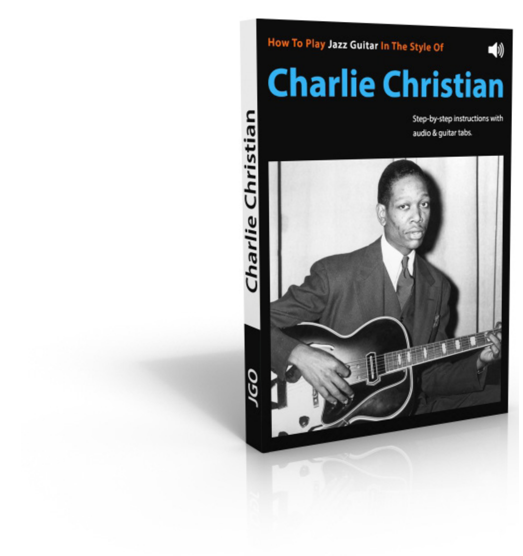
When you buy *How to Play in the Style of Charlie Christian*, you get:

- Detailed explanation of Charlie's favorite soloing concepts laid out in easy to follow and understand language.
- More than 100 musical examples with audio, tab and notation to make it easy to learn Christian's go to soloing concepts and techniques.
- Backing tracks, so you can practice the material in a real life manner.
- Tips on how to practice and take each Charlie Christian soloing concept further in the practice room.
- Enough concepts and material to keep any guitarist busy for months, or even years.

Jeff ★★★★★

> This book breaks down the playing style of the father of jazz guitar. Each concept is easy to understand, and more importantly, easy to directly apply to my playing. I love the way the book includes techniques like scales and chords, but also licks and full solos that get Charlie's sound in my playing. A must have book for any jazz guitarist.

Click Here to download your copy of *How to Play Like Charlie Christian*.



Joe Pass Licks

Joe Pass started playing guitar when he was 9 and he was already playing at weddings when he was 14. In his 20's he moved to New York, where he could listen to some of the best jazz musicians of that time.

Joe Pass got captured by the sound of **bebop**, but unfortunately he also picked up a habit well known to jazz musicians of that time : heroin.

The next decade was wasted for Joe Pass, spending time in jails, until he entered Synanon, a **drug rehabilitation center**. In the center he formed a band with other patients and recorded the album Sounds of Synanon, which was very well received by the jazz critics.

After 3 years in the center he was cured of his addiction and he could move on with his musical career. He started playing in Los Angeles and got involved in the studio scene. In 1973 he recorded Virtuoso an album that made him famous for **solo jazz guitar playing**.

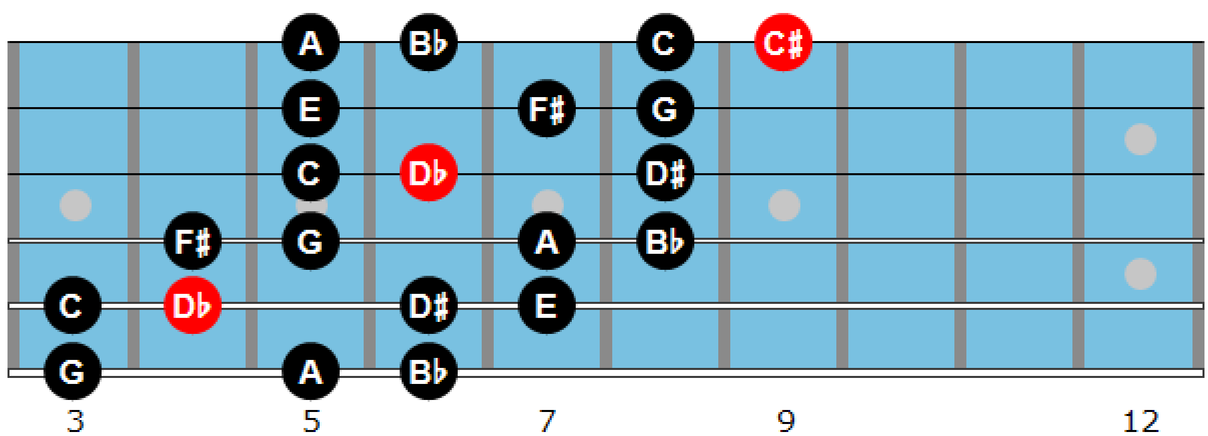
Joe Pass died from cancer in 1994.

- **Recommended listening**: Guitar Virtuoso
- **Gear**: Joe Pass' Guitar Gear
- **Lesson**: Joe Pass Chords

Joe Pass Lick 1

In this lick, a **Db diminished scale** is played over the C7 chord. To create a diminished scale, alternate between whole steps and half steps from the root on. Here are the notes of the Db diminished scale and how it sounds over C7:

Db Diminished Scale	Db	D#	E	F#	G	A	Bb	C
Played over C7	b9	#9	3	b5	5	13	b7	1
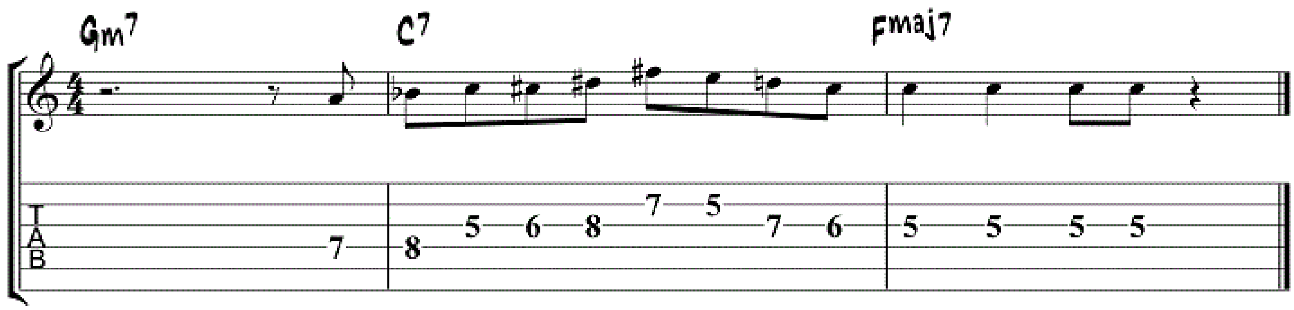


The diminished scale is a symmetrical scale, what means that it comes back every minor third: Db diminished is the same as E diminished is the same as G diminished is the same as Bb diminished.

> A great way to create tension on the dominant chord: play a diminished scale that is a half step higher compared to the root of the dominant chord.

Audio Example 60

Click here to play audio example 60



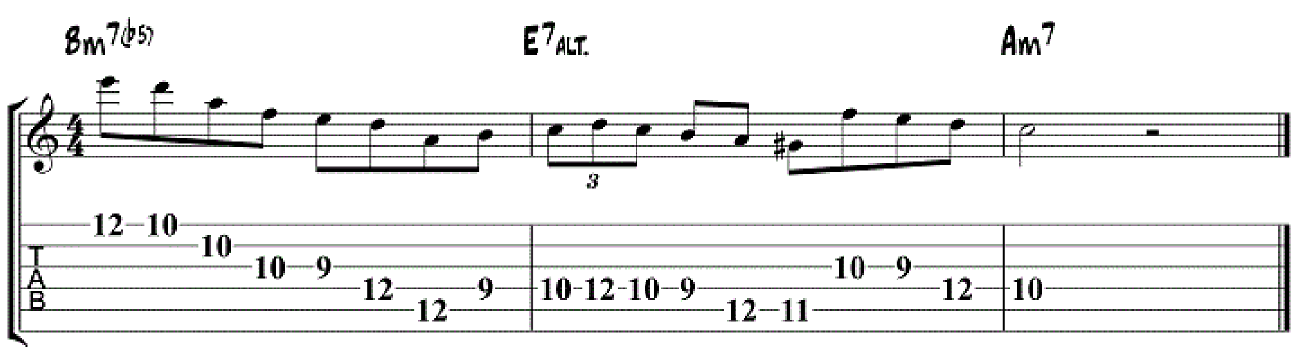
Joe Pass Lick 2

Here, a **D minor triad** arpeggio with an added 9 is played over the Bm7b5 chord, resulting in the following sounds : b3, 4, b5, b7.

On the E7 an **A harmonic minor** scale is played..

Audio Example 61

Click here to play audio example 61

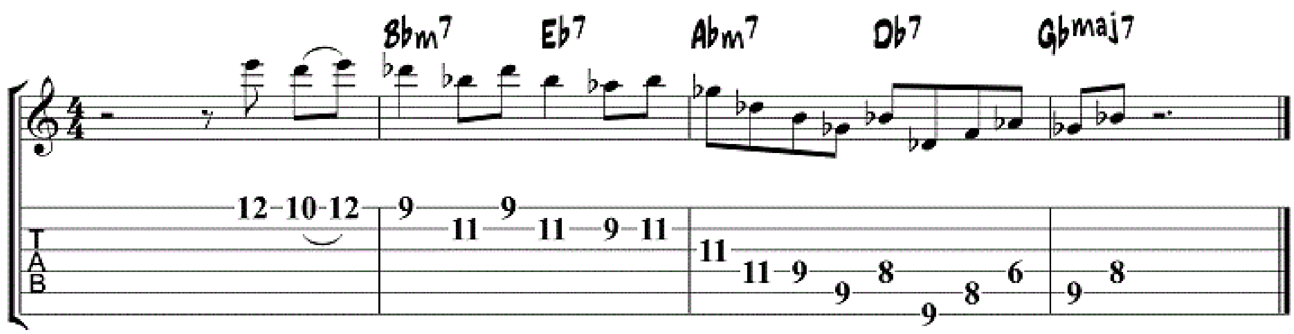


Joe Pass Lick 3

A nice ii V I lick starting with a **pattern** and then going to a **Bbm7 arpeggio** over the Db7 (sounds like Db13).

Audio Example 62

Click here to play audio example 62



"Wes Montogmery was the last guitar innovator, there hasn't been anything really new since then. To me there have only been three real innovators on the guitar - Wes, Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt." - Joe Pass

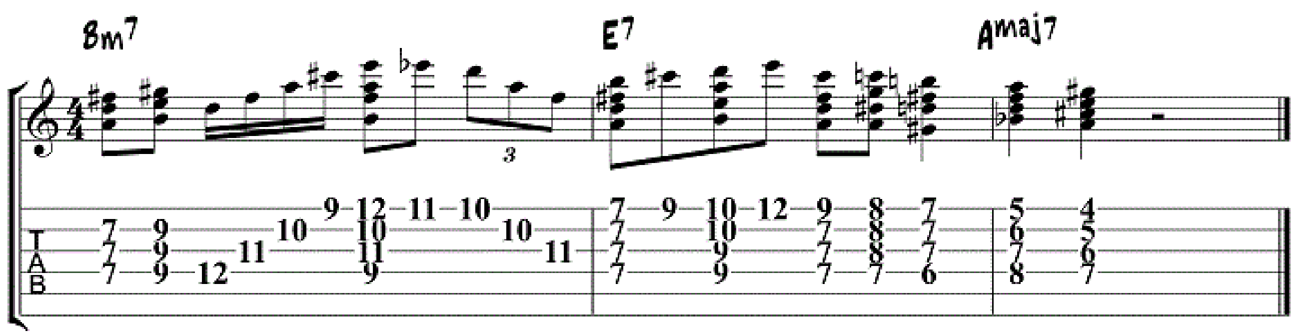
Joe Pass Lick 4

In this Joe Pass inspired **chord lick**, you can hear many of the idiomatic sounds that make up many of Joe's solo guitar licks and phrases.

For this lick, try breaking it down into the mini phrases that make up each bar, that way you will be able to extract these ideas and use them in different combinations when coming up with your own solo jazz guitar lines.

Audio Example 63

Click here to play audio example 63



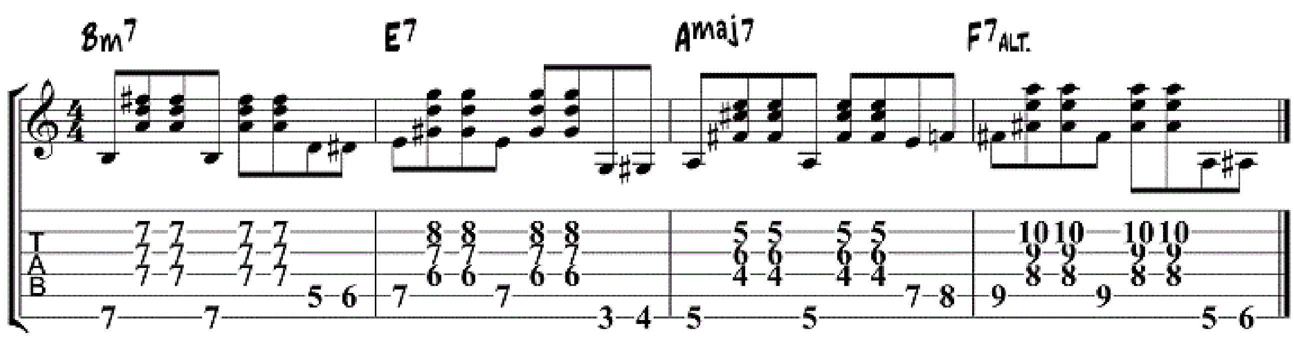
Joe Pass Lick 5

The last lick that we'll look at uses a **favorite rhythm** from Joe's solo guitar work, you can hear a similar idea during his version of *Have You Met Miss Jones*. The idea is that you break up the chord into the bass note and the top 3 notes of the shape, alternating back and forth until you get to the chromatic approach notes in the last two 8th notes of each bar. Try accenting the chords only, not the bass notes, to bring an added Joe sound to the mix with this line.

Joe Pass was a true legend and probably the **best all around jazz guitarist** who ever lived. Learning his lines can help you get into the ears, hands and thought process of this legendary player.

Audio Example 64

Click here to play audio example 64



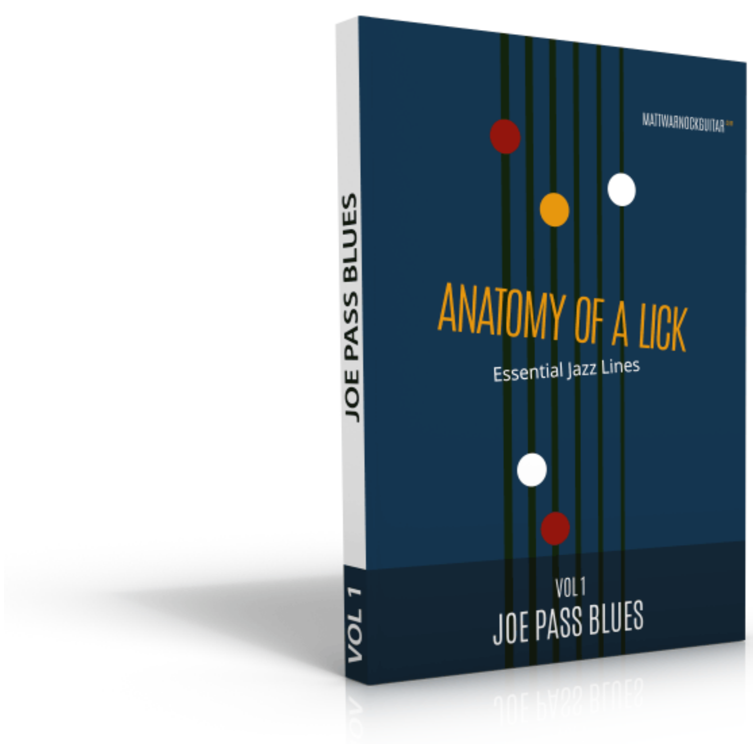
Anatomy of a Lick - Essential Jazz Lines

One of the most important aspects of a successful practice routine is studying classic jazz lines and phrases. While learning licks will get those lines under your fingers, many books fall flat but stopping there with their explanation of jazz phrases.

To get the most out of your jazz vocabulary study, you need to understand not only what notes are being played, but why they sound the way they do.

The Essential Jazz Lines book series teaches you just that, classic licks and every concept used to build those lines on the guitar:

Anatomy of a Lick - Essential Jazz Guitar Lines



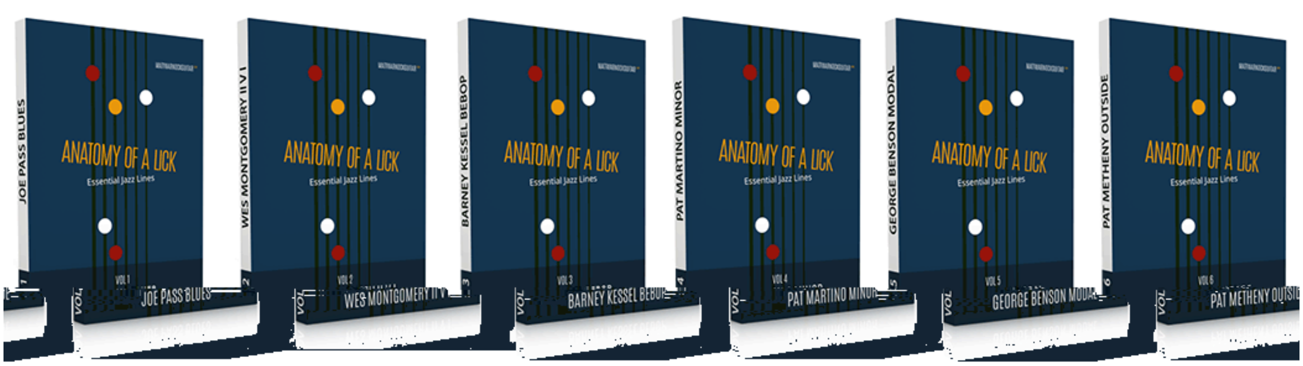
When you buy *Anatomy of a Lick - Essential Jazz Lines*, you get:

- 6 eBooks in PDF format (250 pages in total)
  Volume 1 - *Joe Pass Blues*
  Volume 2 - *Wes Montgomery ii V I*
  Volume 3 - *Barney Kessel Bebop*
  Volume 4 - *Pat Martino Minor ii V i*
  Volume 5 - *George Benson Modal*
  Volume 6 - *Pat Metheny Outside*
- All material presented in tab, notation, and audio.
- Backing tracks for easy and engaging study.
- Easy to follow theory for each concept.
- Practice guides on how to learn and apply each lick.
- More than enough material to keep you practicing for months.

Bill Chalmers ★★★★★

> I have purchased all six of these books (anatomy of a lick). They contain excellent material. I eagerly await the next volume becoming available.
>
> Many thanks to Matt for his work in putting these together.

Click Here to download your copy of *How to Play Like Wes Montgomery*.



Kenny Burrell Licks

Kenny Burrell has been a high in demand guitarist during all his career (he was **Duke Ellington**'s favorite guitar player). Some of the jazz giants he played with : Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Quincy Jones, John Coltrane, Jimmy Smith, Stan Getz, Billie Holiday, ...

His most famous record is **Midnight Blue** with the Latin flavored hit *Chitlins Con Carne*, later covered by blues giant Stevie Ray Vaughan.

If you are a fan of jazz blues, **Bebop lines** and solid groove, then Kenny Burrell is the right player for you.

Recommended listening: Midnight Blue
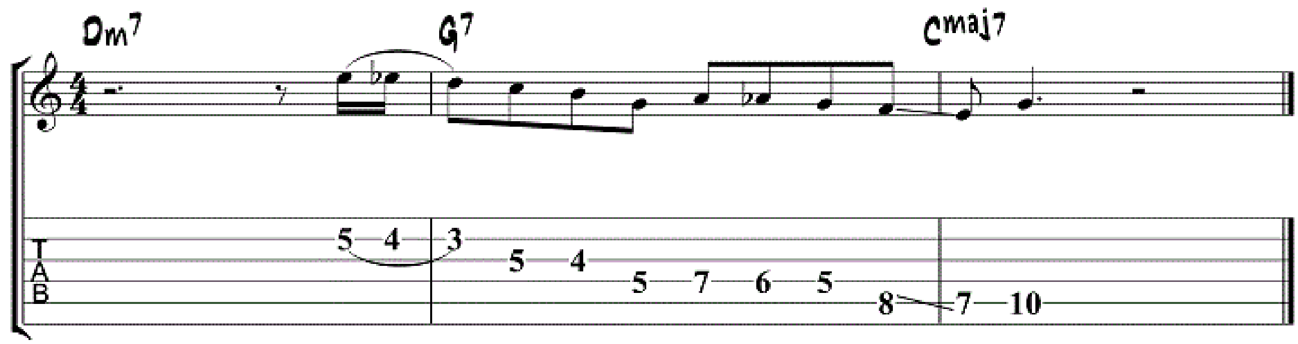


Kenny Burrell Lick 1

This first lick in the style of Kenny Burrell is a nice way to change position on the fret board.

Audio Example 65

Click here to play audio example 65

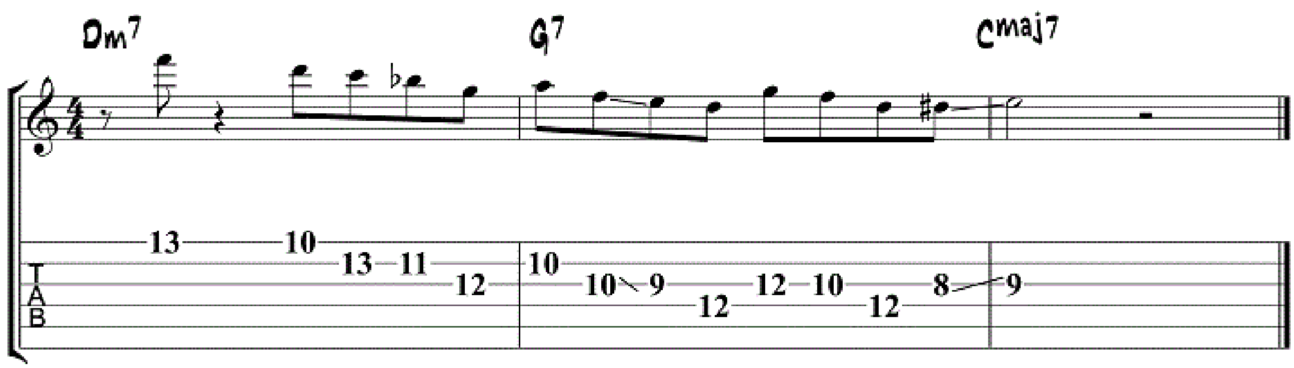


Kenny Burrell Lick 2

This second lick starts with a G pentatonic scale, advances to a Dm9 arpeggio and resolves in the 3 of Cmaj7.

Audio Example 66

Click here to play audio example 66

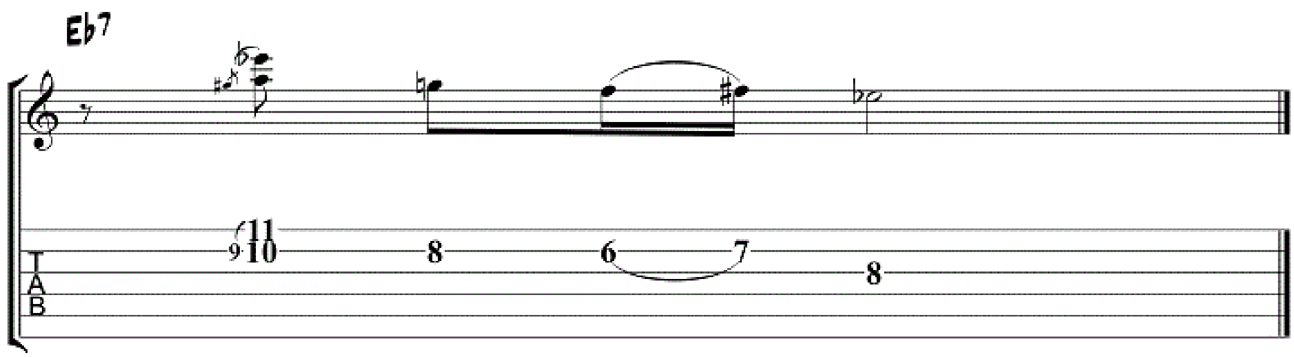


Kenny Burrell Lick 3

This is a bluesy lick in the Eb blues pentatonic scale.

Audio Example 67

Click here to play audio example 67
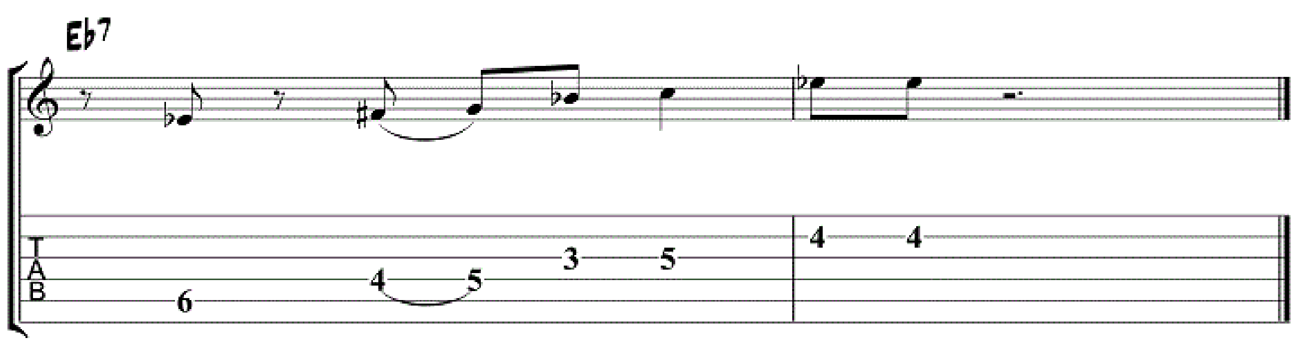


Kenny Burrell Lick 4

A fun and classic sounding Kenny Burrell lick that is based on the Eb Major Pentatonic Scale, used over an Eb7 chord.

Audio Example 68

Click here to play audio example 68
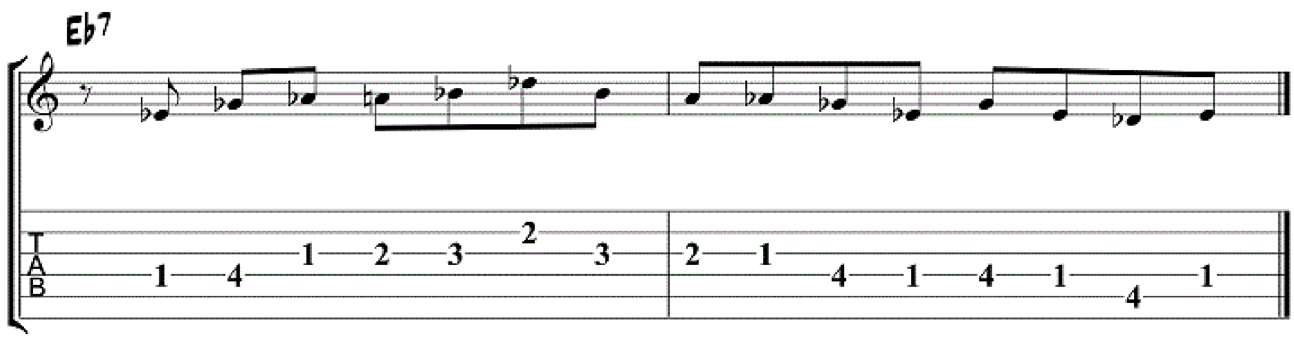


Kenny Burrell Lick 5

Here you are using the Eb Minor Blues scale to solo over an Eb7 chord in a style very reminiscent of Kenny's '60s recordings.

Audio Example 69

Click here to play audio example 69



Pat Metheny Licks

Pat Metheny's **versatility** is almost beyond compare to other musicians. It seems like he masters every style and succeeds in blending styles in a natural and elegant way.

His musical diversity shows if you have a look at some of the people he played with: from Steve Reich to Ornette Coleman to Jim Hall to David Bowie to Noa to Herbie Hancock to ...

Pat Metheny manages to combine virtuosity with accessibility, resulting in music that is pleasing for 2 kinds of audiences, hence his popularity.

- **Recommended Listening**: Beyond the Missouri Sky
- **Gear**: Pat Metheny's Guitars, Amps & Effects



Pat Metheny Lick 1

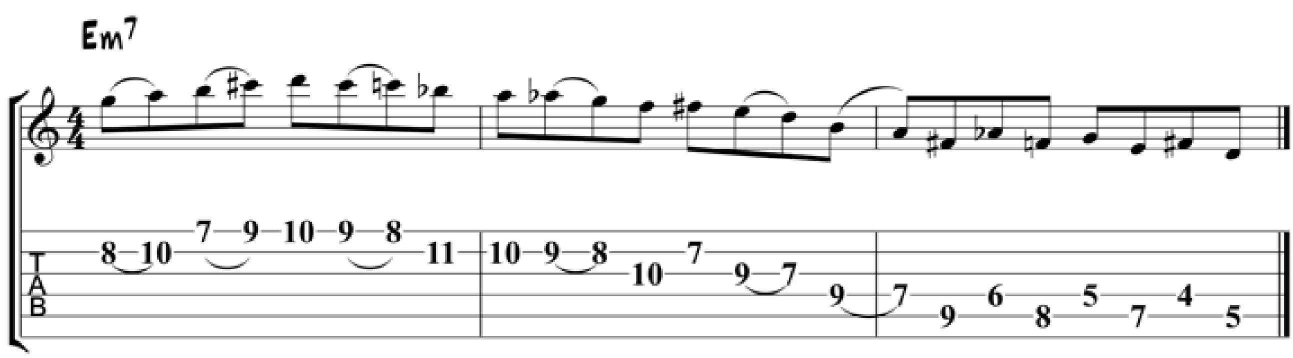
This typical Pat Metheny lick contains a number of **3rd intervals**, both diatonic and chromatic.

Pat is a fan of playing **chromatic thirds**, both ascending and descending, which you can see at the end of the lick in this example.

If you are looking to get a **Metheny vibe** into your solos, try taking those last few chromatic 3rds out of this lick and apply them to other musical situations in your playing.

Audio Example 70

Click here to play audio example 70



Pat Metheny Lick 2

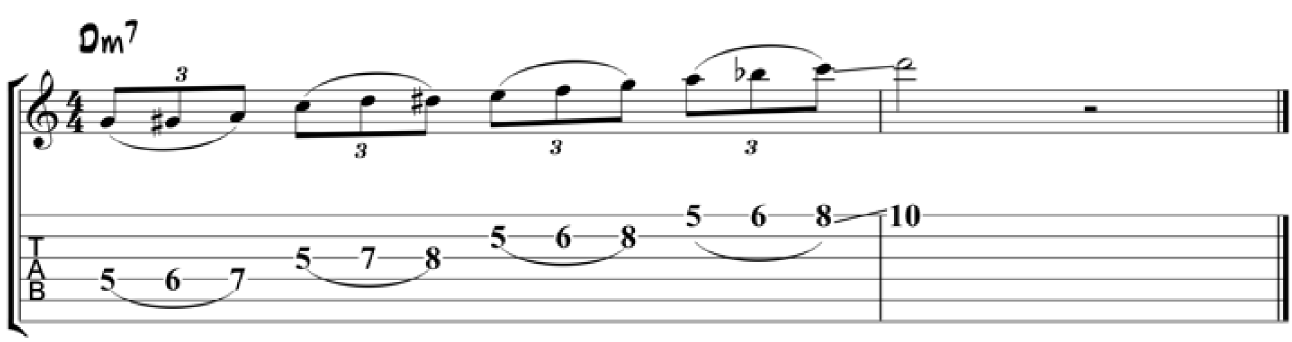
One of the elements of Pat's playing that stands out is his fluid, **legato playing**, which you can see and hear in the next example.

Though many of us associate three-note-per-string scales with Rock and Metal, Pat translates these **scale shapes** to the jazz idiom as he uses to hammer-ons per string to build a highly fluid line over a Dm7 chord.

If you like this approach, go back and work on three-note-per-string scales and add **as many slurs per string** as you can in order to digest this side of Pat's soloing vocabulary.

Audio Example 71

Click here to play audio example 71



Pat Metheny Lick 3

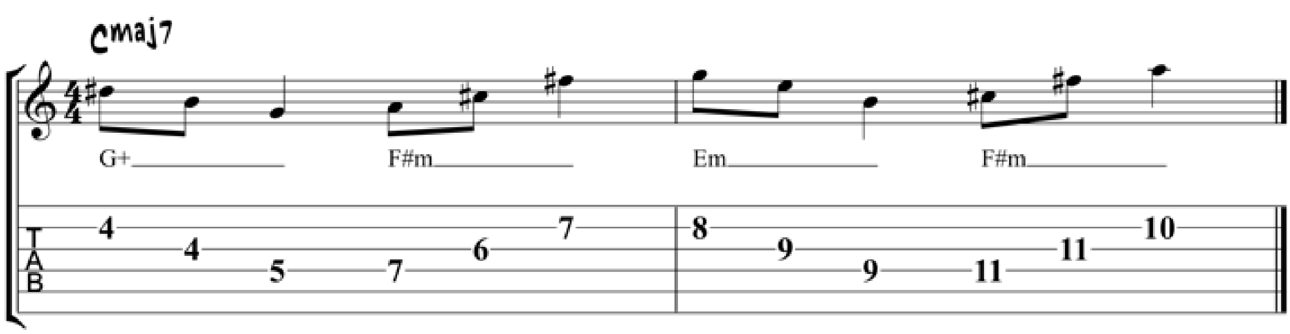
Here you are stepping outside and using **non-diatonic triads** to build tension over a maj7 chord, in this case Cmaj7.

Notice how there are some diatonic notes in each triad, and some **tension-building notes**, which eventually resolve to the note A, the 6th, on the last note of the line.

Experimenting with non-diatonic triads over maj7 chords is tricky to get right, but it's something you can work on in order to get that "**tension-release**" sound into your playing that makes Pat's soloing so interesting from a melodic standpoint.

Audio Example 72

Click here to play audio example 72
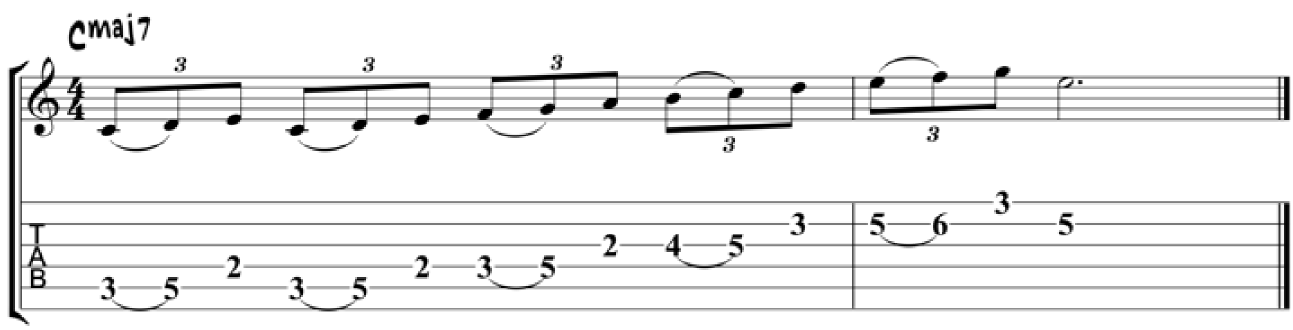


Pat Metheny Lick 4

This phrase uses string crossing to build a semi-legato line that mixes **hammers with plucked notes** in a cool sounding and effective manner.

This technique can be a bit tricky to get under your fingers at first, so go slow, **use a metronome** and really nail that string crossing before raising the tempo and getting the whole phrase up to speed.

Audio Example 73

Click here to play audio example 73



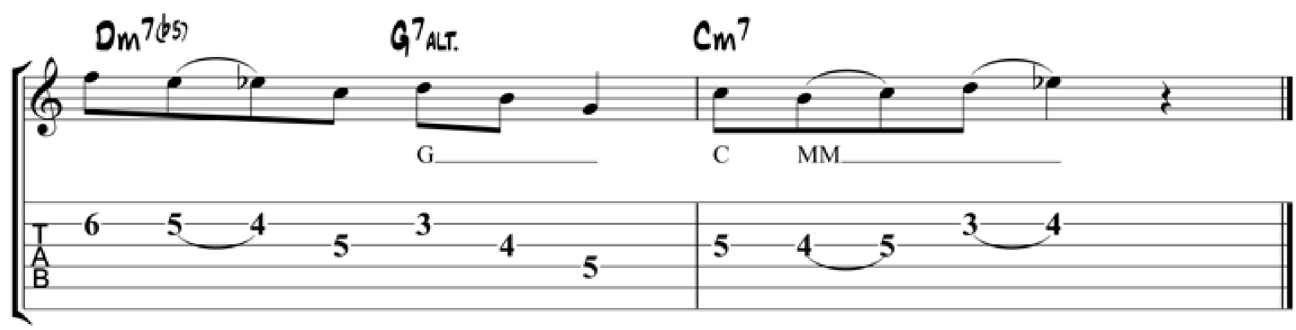
Pat Metheny Lick 5

The final lick is a minor ii-V-I in C that uses a G triad over G7alt, as well as the **melodic minor scale** over Cm7.

Sometimes something as simple as a root-triad is the best way to go in your soloing, so don't forget to check out these **simple appraoches** as well as the more complext concepts in your studies.

Audio Example 74

Click here to play audio example 74



If you are a fan of Pat Metheny's playing style, then studying and applying these five classic Metheny phrases to your playing is a great way to dig into the thought process of one of the **greatest improvisers** in jazz history.

Wes Montgomery Licks

There is no doubt that Wes Montgomery was one of **the most legendary players of all time**. In fact, when you say the words "jazz guitar," many people immediately associate the genre with "The Thumb", as he was affectionately known.

Beginning his career by learning and performing **note-by-note transcriptions of Charlie Christian solos**, Wes quickly moved on to become one of the most influential guitarists from his, or any, era. His influence can be heard in the playing of great guitarists such as *Pat Martino, George Benson, Pat Metheny* and *Emily Remler*, just to name a few. You would be hard pressed to find any jazz guitarist that wasn't influenced by Wes' playing at one point or another in their development.

Since Wes was such a powerhouse in the jazz guitar world, it is a good idea to spend some time **studying his licks, phrases, and improvisational concepts**, which is what this lesson is designed to do. So, grab your favorite axe (an L-5 if you have one handy) and begin exploring these commonly used phrases and improvisational concepts taken from the playing of one of the greatest jazzers of all time, Wes Montgomery.

- **Recommended listening**: Smokin' at the Half Note (live)
- **Gear:** Wes Montgomery's Guitar Gear

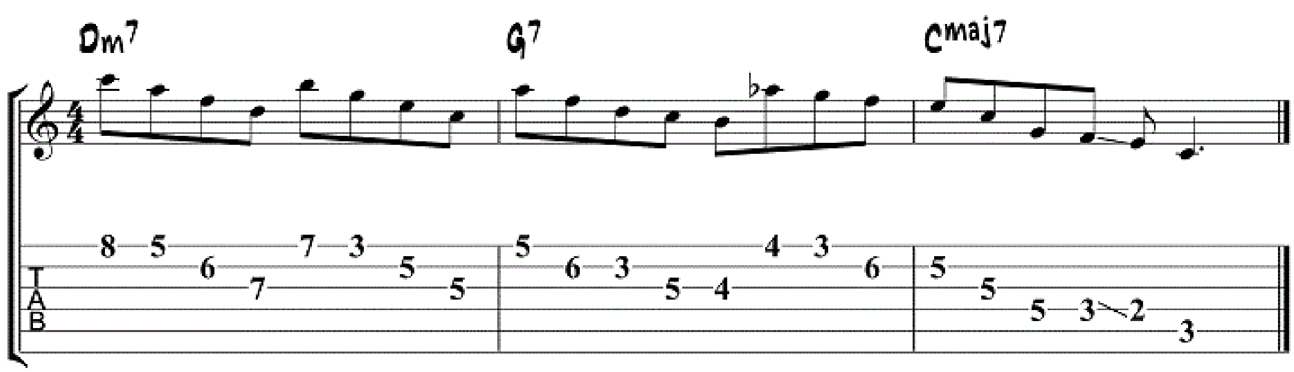
Wes Montgomery - II V I Licks

The first lick starts with a **series of arpeggio's**. The first 4 notes make a Dm7 arpeggio, followed by a Cmaj7 arpeggio, then again a Dm7. The Cmaj7 arpeggio in the first bar contains all the tensions of Dm7 plus the b7: C (b7), E(9), G (11), B (13). The Last bar is build around a C triad arpeggio.

Cmaj7 Arpeggio	C	E	G	B
	R	3	5	7
Played over Dm7	b7	9	11	13

Audio Example 75

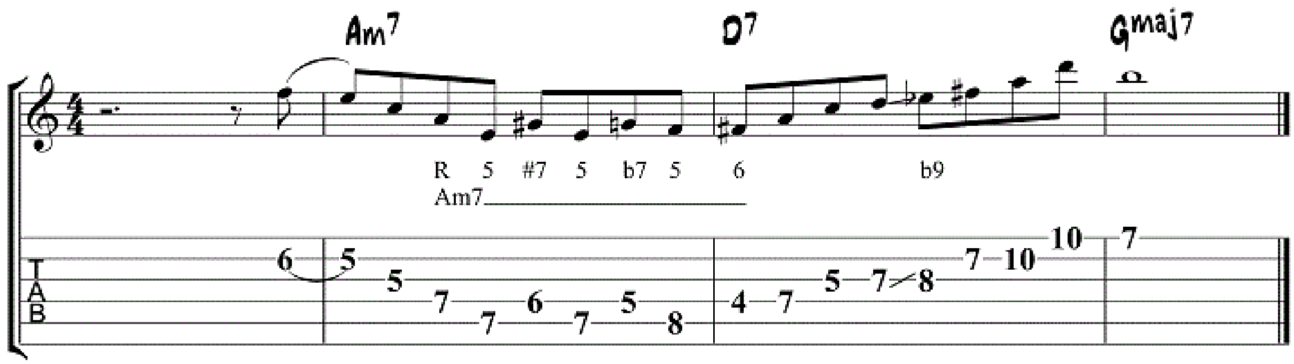
Click here to play audio example 75



The next lick is played over a ii V I in G major. The second half of the first bar consists of a chromatic line that is also **used a lot by Pat Metheny**, outlining a D7b9.

Audio Example 76

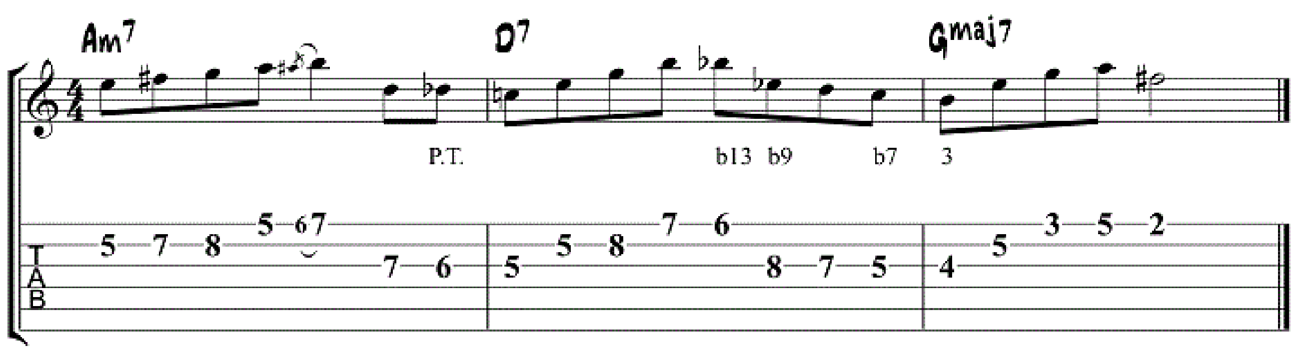
Click here to play audio example 76



This next lick has a **nice voice leading** between the b7 of D7 and 3rd of Gmaj7.

Audio Example 77

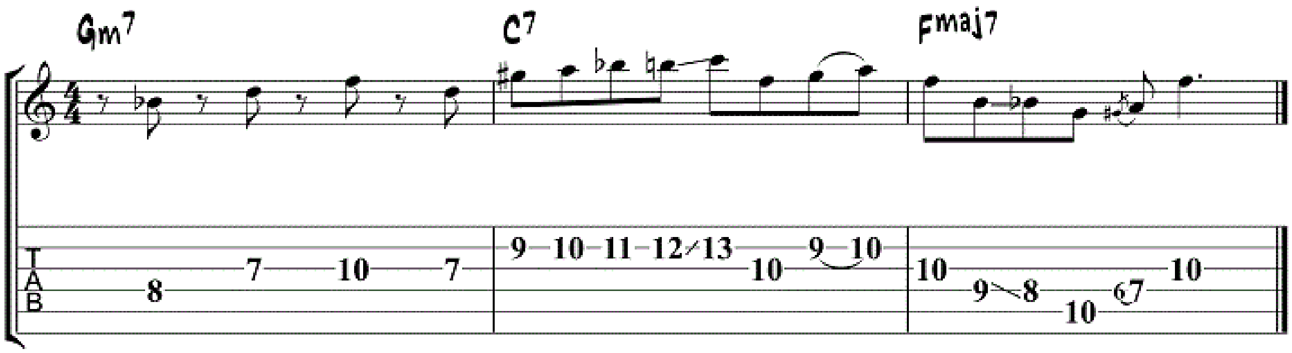
Click here to play audio example 77



This one's **a blues cliche**, though in the hands of a master like Wes any cliche sounded good.

Audio Example 78

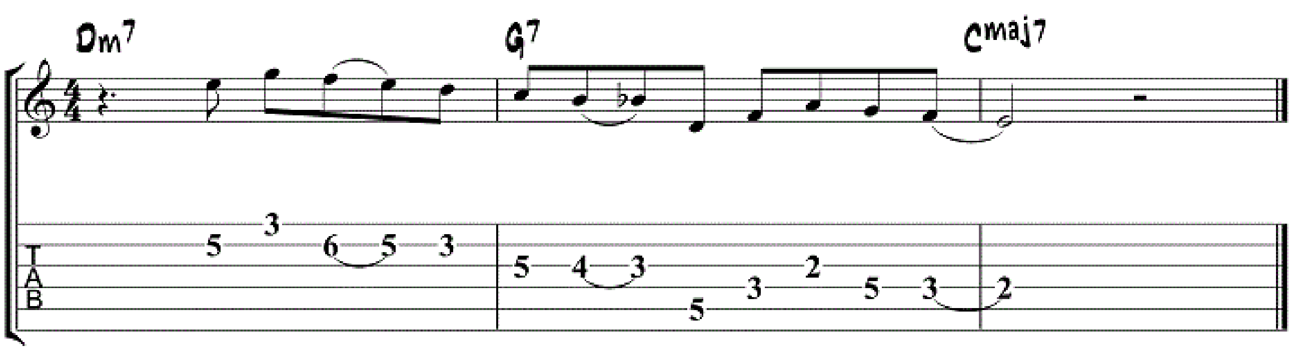
Click here to play audio example 78



This lick over a ii V I in C major has a **nice chromatic line** in the second bar, delayed by the Dm arpeggio.

Audio Example 79

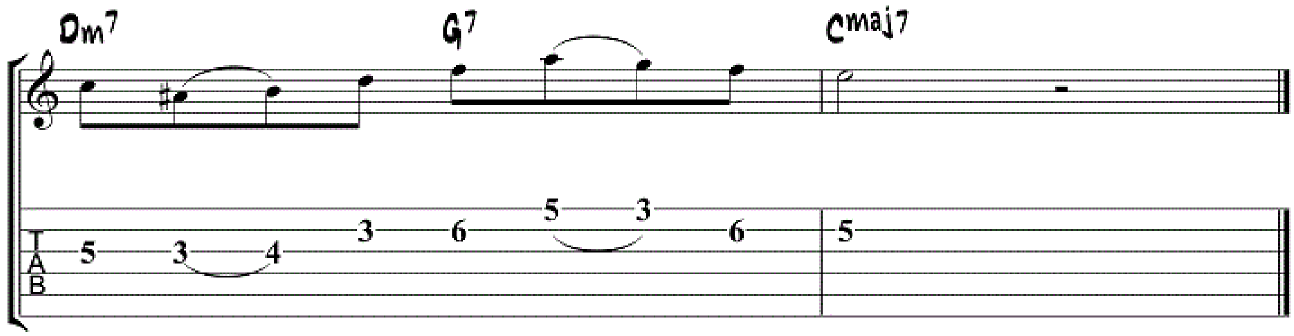
Click here to play audio example 79



This one speaks for itself:

Audio Example 80

Click here to play audio example 80



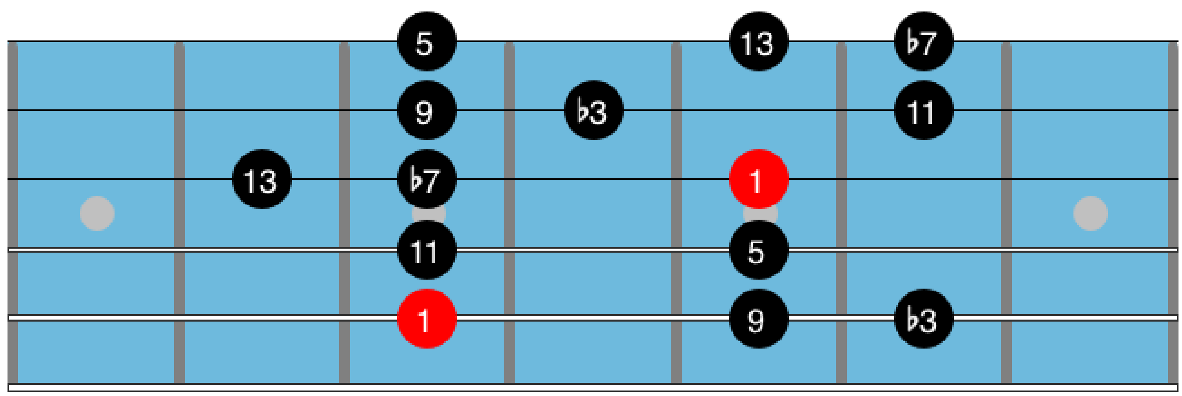
> *"The man who has meant the most to me in recent years is Wes Montgomery. I'd heard him talked about a lot quite a while ago, and then he made his first record... He really impressed me. Since Charlie Christian, the only completely original soloist is Wes."*
> - Freddie Green

Wes Montgomery - Minor Lick

This minor lick is in the **D Dorian scale** with some added chromatics. Here is a sample D Dorian fingering to get you started if this scale is new to you:

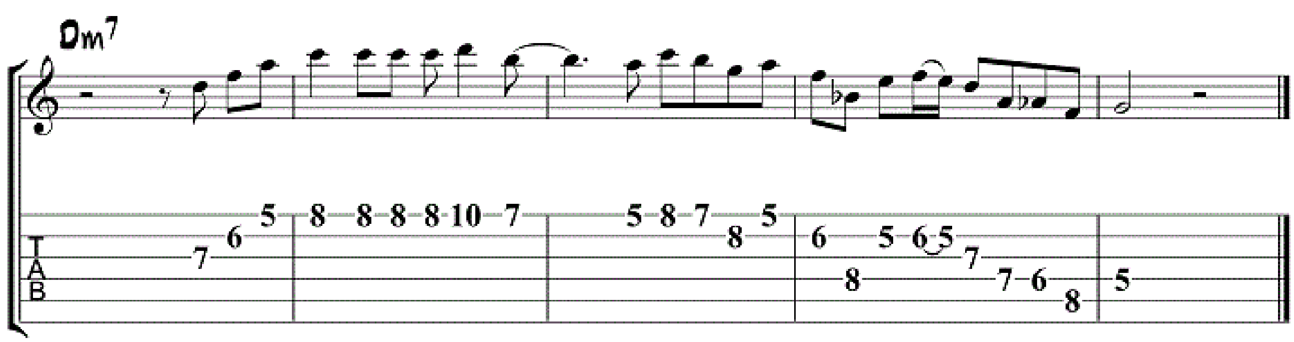
Audio Example 81

Click here to play audio example 81



Audio Example 82

Click here to play audio example 82

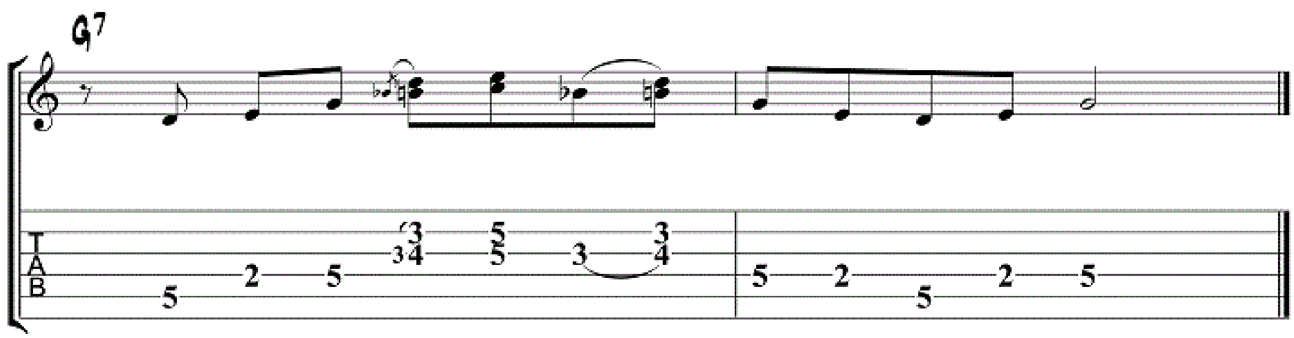


Wes Montgomery - Dominant Lick

A bluesy lick over G7 with **double stops** (playing 2 notes at once).

Audio Example 83

Click here to play audio example 83



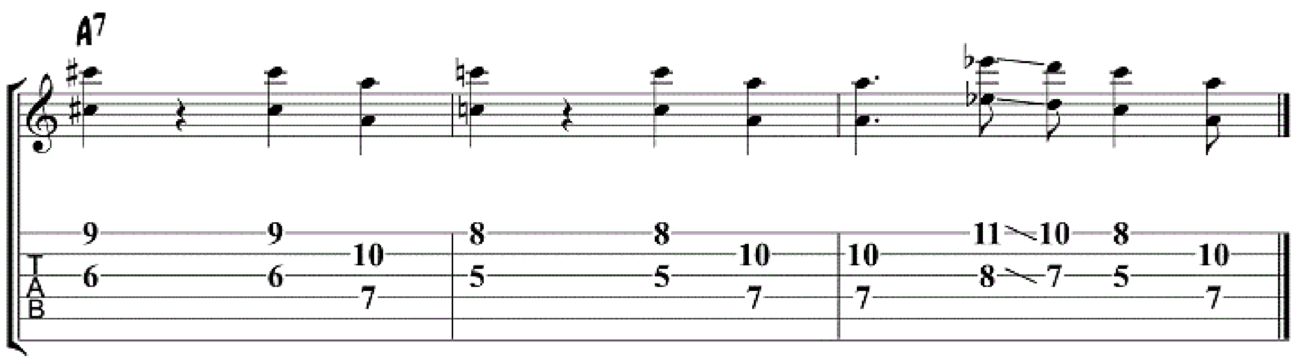
> *"The greatest of us all is unquestionably Wes Montgomery"* - Barney Kessel

Wes Montgomery - Octave Licks

This first octave lick is a bluesy line over an A7 chord, mixing the major 3rd (C#) with the blue note (C) to get that **classic Wes sound**.

Audio Example 84

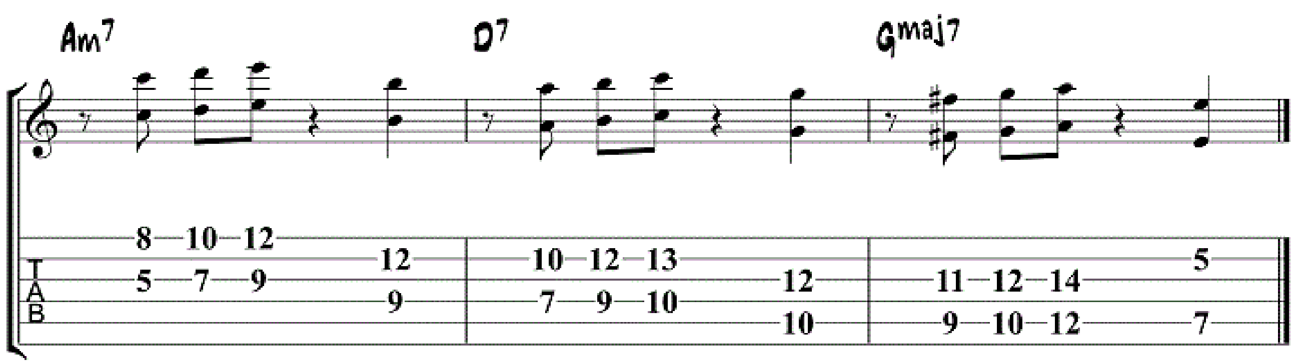
Click here to play audio example 84



Another approach Wes liked to use with octaves was to **run a rhythm across a ii V I phrase**, which you can hear and see in the next example.

Audio Example 85

Click here to play audio example 85



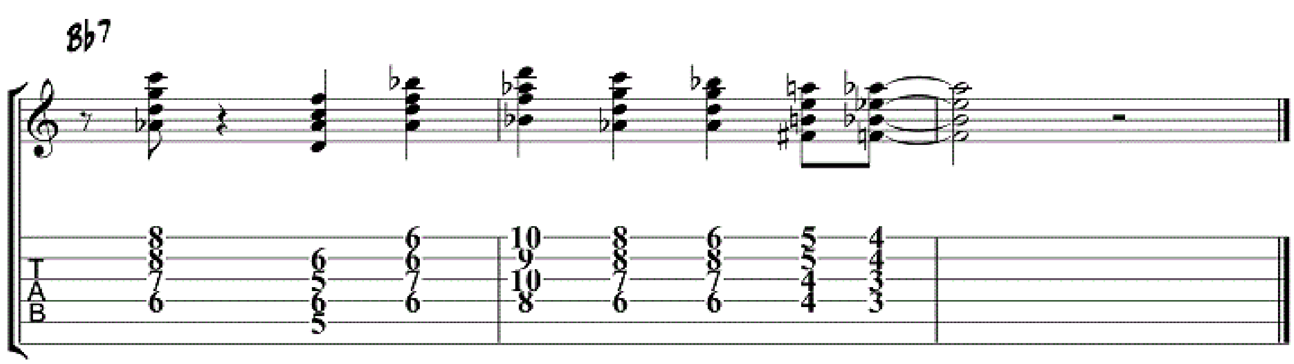
> "Playing octaves was just a coincidence. I used to have headaches every time I played octaves, because it was extra strain, but the minute I'd quit I'd be all right. But now I don't have headaches when I play octaves." - Wes Montgomery

Wes Montgomery - Chord Licks

This first Wes chord lick uses a number of **Bb7 inversions** (including 9ths), as well as a chromatic approach chord to finish the lick in typical Wes style.

Audio Example 86

Click here to play audio example 86

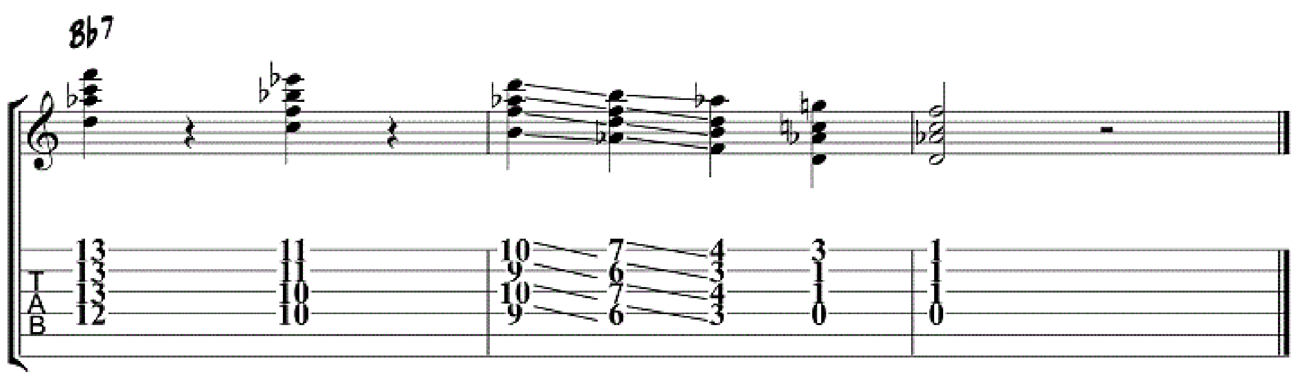


Here is a bluesy chord lick that uses a Bdim7 chord to **create a Bb7b9 sound** over the given chord change.

Bdim7 Chord	B	D	F	Ab
	1	b3	b5	bb7
Played over Bb7	b9	3	5	b7

Audio Example 87

Click here to play audio example 87



Wes Style Blues Solo

To help you take these licks from the technical side of your practice routine to the musical, here is a sample **solo over a Bb Blues** that uses licks from this lesson in its construction.

Here is a **backing track** that you can use to practice this solo, as well as all the licks in this lesson, as you take these ideas further.
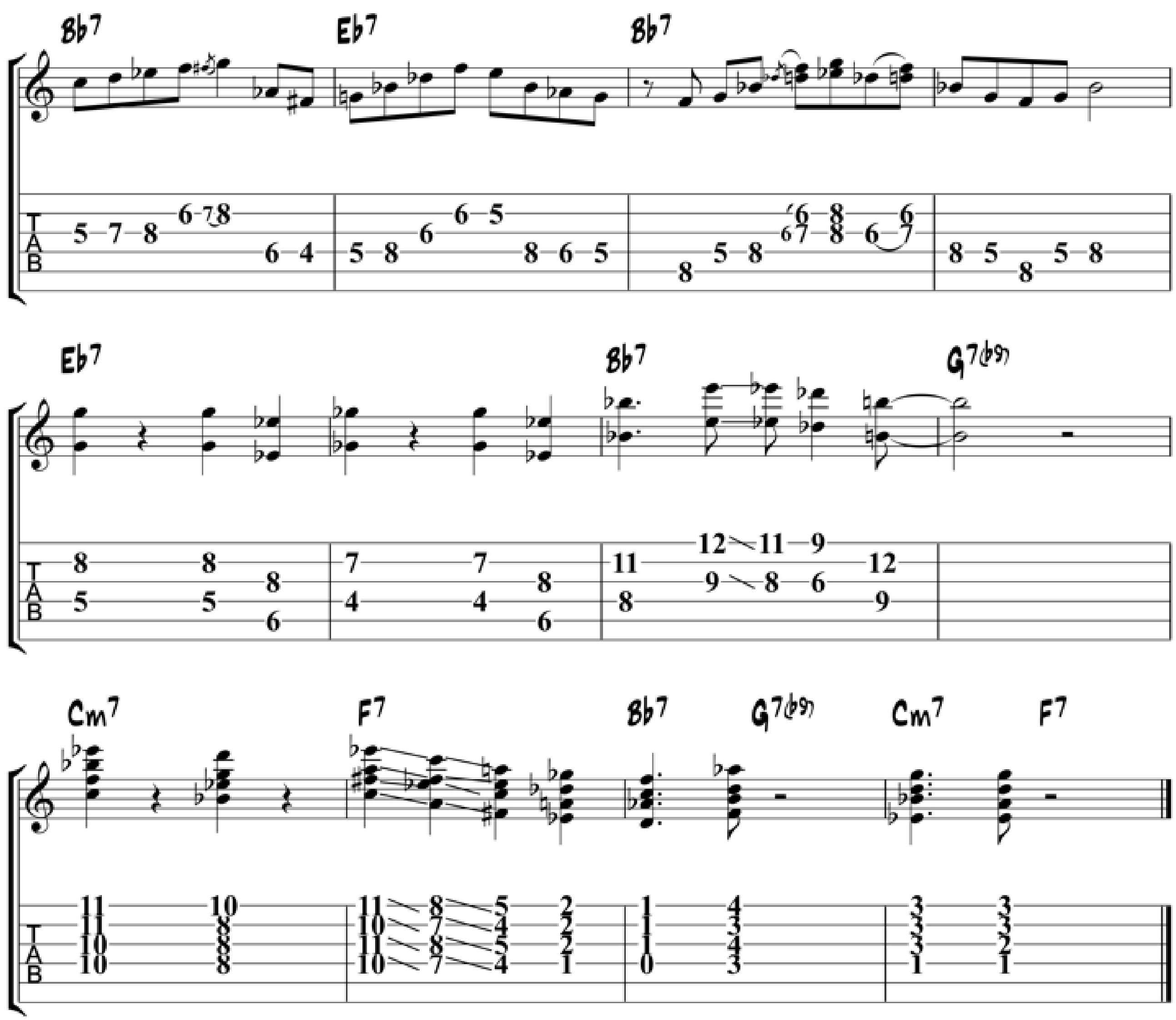
Backing Track 9

Click here to play backing track 9

And here is the solo to practice. Go slow at first, **learning each 4 bar phrase**, as you learn the entire solo build in a typical “three tier” appraoch that was characteristic of Wes’ playing.

Audio Example 88

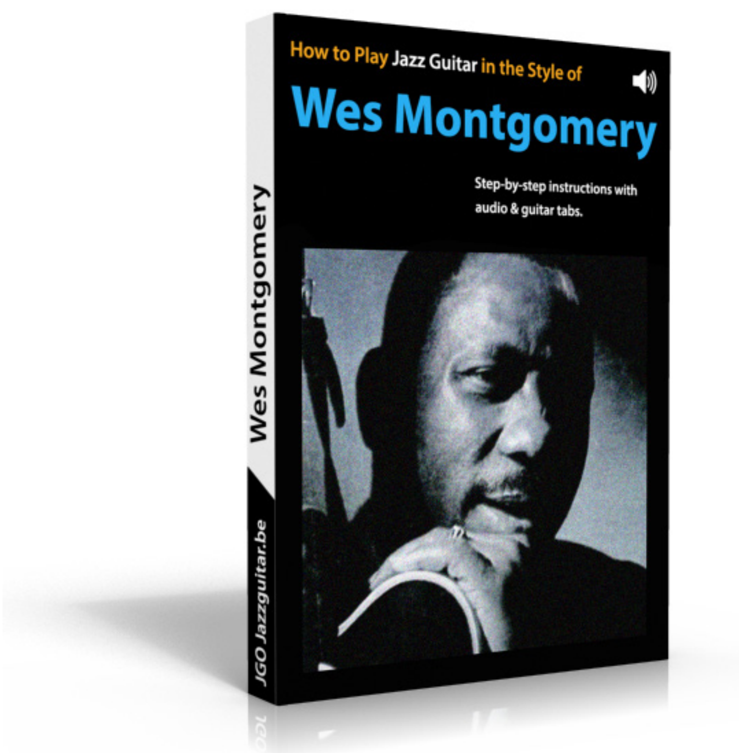
Click here to play audio example 88



How to Play in the Style of Wes Montgomery

Wes Montgomery is considered by many guitar players to be thegreatest jazz guitarist ever. He is also often cited as the most influential jazz guitarist since Charlie Christian and inspired countless guitarists to pick up the instrument.

Now, you too can be inspired by Wes Montgomery's playing as you learn how to play lines, octaves, chords and tunes in the style of "The Thumb": How to Play in the Style of Wes Montgomery



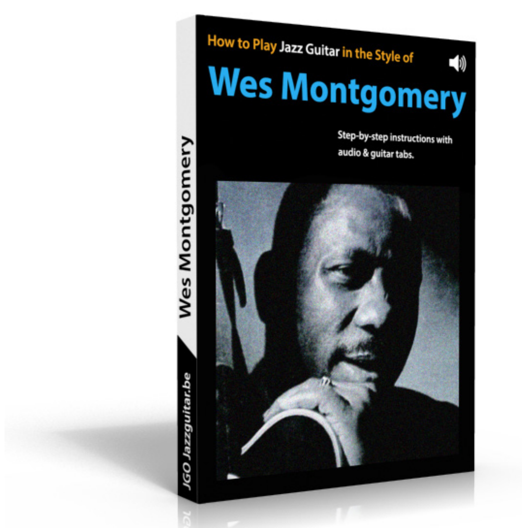
When you buy *How to Play in the Style of Wes Montgomery*, you get:

- 5 Chapters (196 pages) packed with essential Wes Montgomery lines, chords, octaves and theoretical concepts.
- Easy to understand, detailed explanations of each concept in the book so players of any level of experience can learn from this material.
- 158 audio examples to get these concepts in your ears and fingers.
- All examples in tab and notation for easy comprehension of the material.
- Backing tracks to help you apply this material to your own solos and comping.
- Enough studying material to keep you busy for years.
- All for less than the price of one private guitar lesson!

Tony ★★★★★

Great resource material on the the greatest Jazz guitarist in my book. Excellent examples and explanations. Not just a book on licks. Theory and application is top notch.
WELL DONE!!!!!

Click Here to download your copy of *How to Play Like Wes Montgomery*.



Chapter 6 - Jazz Blues

The blues originated in the USA and evolved from African, European and Latin influences. Blues had a very big influence on jazz and nowadays every jazz musician has some blues in his repertoire.

The blues is found in the solos of every great jazz guitarist, its harmony is the basis for countless comping patterns, and the blues form is a favorite of jazz composers. Because of this, studying jazz blues is essential for any guitarist exploring jazz.

Speaking of jams, jazz blues is the most commonly called type of tune in jazz jam sessions, at least the ones I've been at.

So, having a strong understanding of the progression, harmony, form, and soloing concepts of jazz blues prepares you to nail that tune at your next jam session.

Besides all of this, playing jazz blues is just plain fun.

It's a **challenging form and progression**, but one that leads to hours of enjoyment in the woodshed as you explore this popular musical form.

Check out the material in this section, it'll prepare you to jam on a jazz blues tune with confidence and authenticity the next time its called on a gig or jam session.

Blues Chord Progressions & Variations

We all know the chord progression for a typical blues, but there are so many variations that it's hard to know them all. There are many **many different sets of blues progressions**, going from the basic original blues to more modern variations like the changes played by Charlie Parker. The foundation however stays the 12 bar blues with a set of 3 chord changes.

Blues Characteristics

Before we dive into the theory behind each of the 6 jazz blues progressions in this lesson, here are some characteristics of the blues:

- Most blues chord progressions are **12 bars** long, although there are also 8, 14, 16, 24 or more bar blues changes. There are many different 12 bar blues forms though.
- The tonic chord of a blues is a **dominant 7 chord**, a fact that doesn't fit very well in traditional music theory.
- The blues is not only about chord changes and scales, but is also about a certain sound, a feeling. Responsible for that sound are the **blue notes**: a lowered 3rd note and a lowered 5th note.
- The 3 basic chords of a blues are all dominant 7 chords.

Now that you've looked at some blues background, let's take them to the fretboard in the next section.

In the audio files and written examples below you will hear and see **common comping patterns** over each of these 12-bar progressions. To keep things practical, the chord voicings on the chart are written as you would see them on a lead sheet, G7, Dm7, Cmaj7 etc.

But, as in any jazz comping situation, those chords can be **embellished** with 9ths, 13ths, 6ths, and other color tones. So, if you hear or see a G13 chord and it's written as G7, that's a common approach to comping over lead sheet jazz-blues chord changes, and it is something you can explore further.

Basic Blues

To begin, let's take a look at how the **basic blues changes** look from a chord name standpoint:

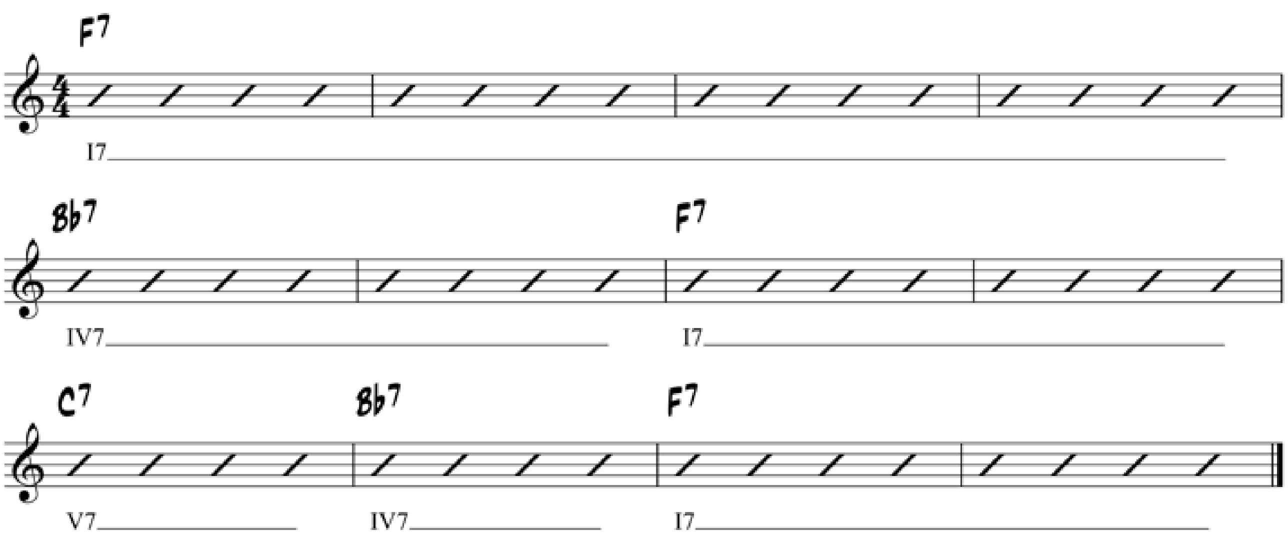
Basic Blues (aka I-IV-V Blues)			
F7			
Bb7		F7	
C7	Bb7	F7	

Let's move on to looking at these chords from a lead sheet standpoint. Notice how these changes use only three chords, the I7, IV7 and V7 chords. Because of this, they are often referred to as **I-IV-V blues chord** changes.

Listen to an **example** of these changes in the audio file below. If you already have a few 7th chords under your fingers, then try jamming along with the changes over the backing track, or on your own at first if you need some practice to get the tempo worked out.

Audio Example 89

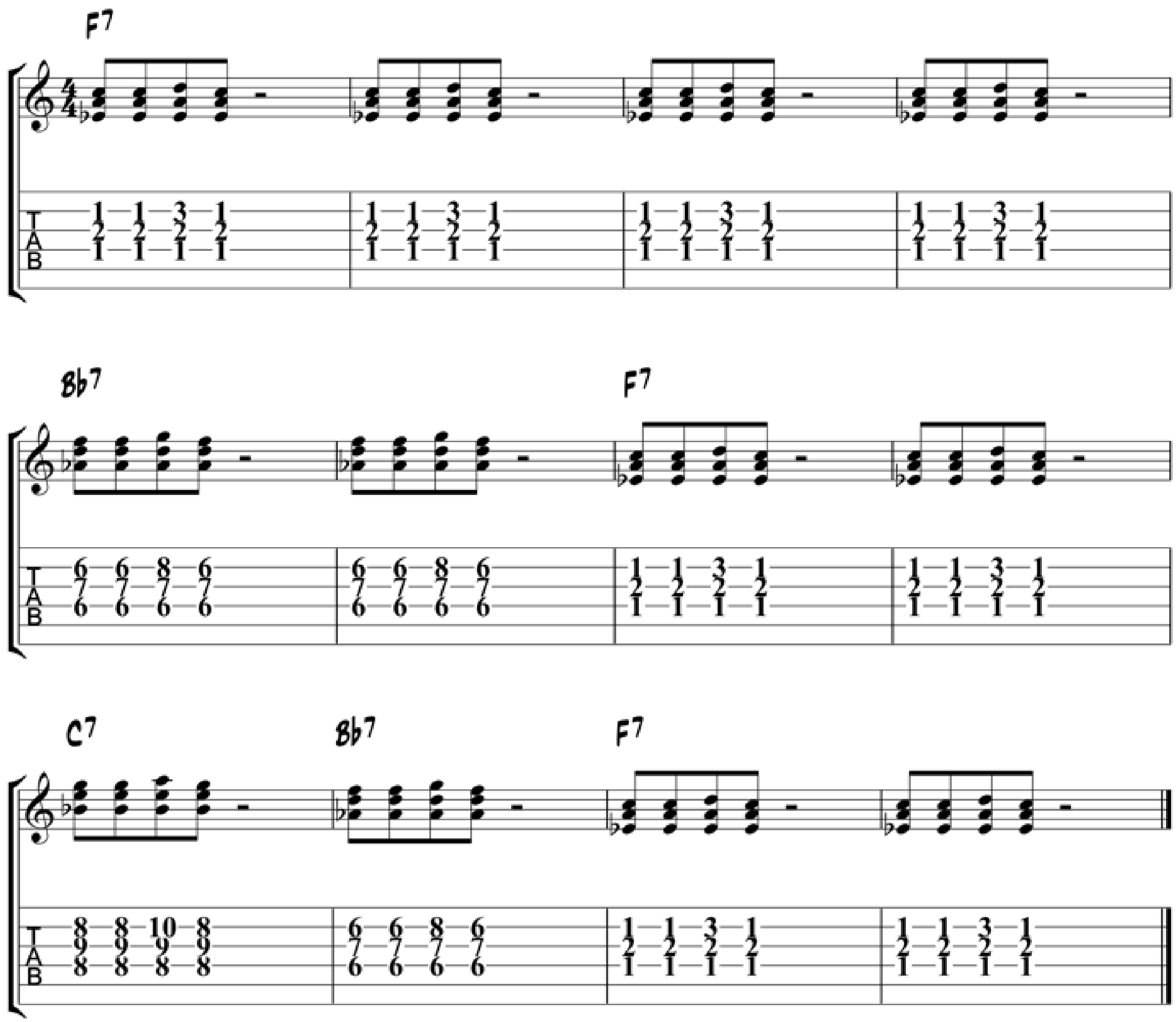
Click here to play audio example 89



To help you get started with taking these chords onto the fretboard, here is a **chord study** you can learn and apply to your own playing over the basic blues changes. To keep things simple, this study is written in a basic riff style, where a short chord riff is played over each change in the progression.

Audio Example 90

Click here to play audio example 90



1930's Blues Changes

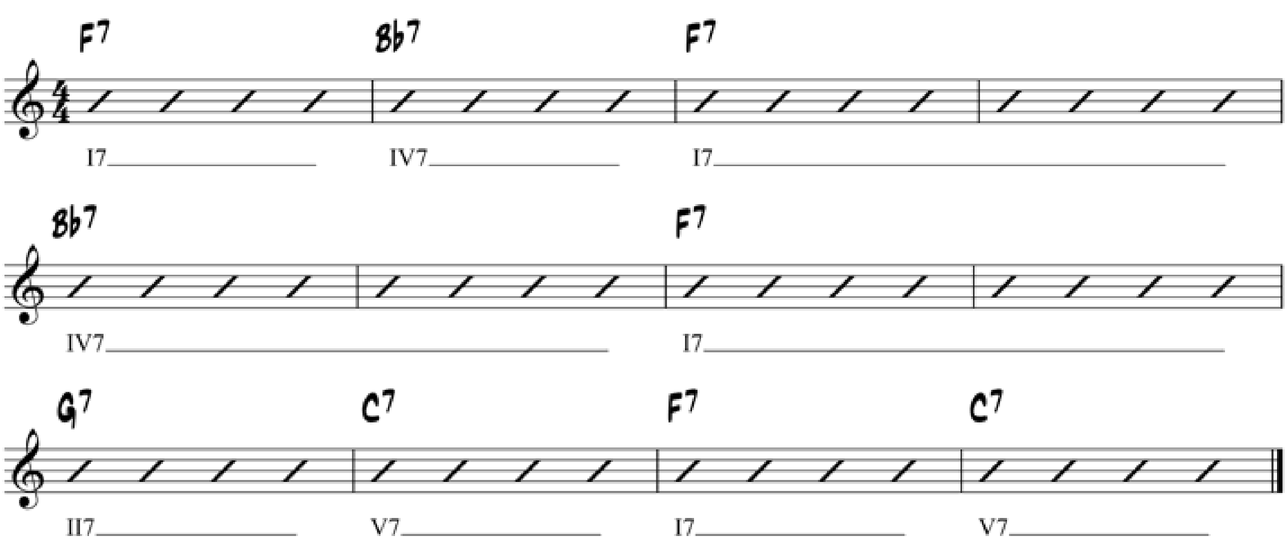
Moving on to the next blues form, you will now add a **IV7 chord in bar 2** of the blues, as well as a II7-V7 turnaround in the last four bars. Here is how those chords look in the **key of F**:

1930s Blues Changes (aka Quick Change Blues)			
F7	Bb7	F7	
Bb7		F7	
G7	C7	F7	C7

Because there is a quick move to the IV7 chord and back to the tonic in the first three bars, this chord progression is often referred to as a **quick change blues** progression.

Audio Example 91
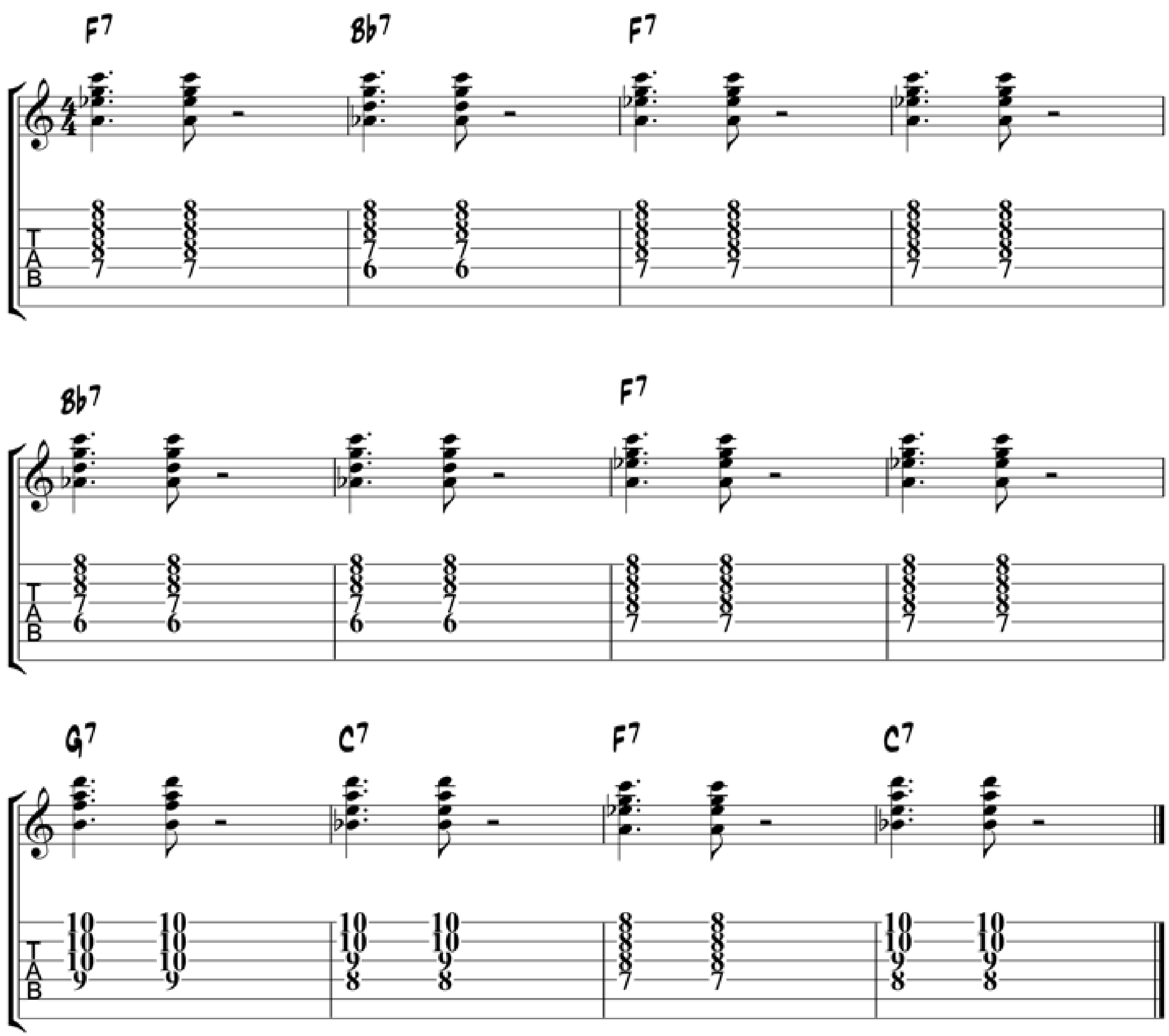
Click here to play audio example 91



Now that you have your head around these quick-change chords, here is a chord study written out over a quick-change **blues in F** progression. Start by learning the chords **on your own slowly**, then play along with the given audio, and finally take them to a backing track on your own.

Audio Example 92

Click here to play audio example 92



Count Basie Blues

One of the innovations **Count Basie** brought to the blues, or at least popularized, is the use of the #IVdim7 chord in bars two and 6 of a jazz blues progression.

You will also see in the examples below that there is a iim7-V7/IV in bar 4 of the tune, as well as a **VI7b9 chord in bar 8**, both now commonly used ideas that were popularized by the Basie Band.

Here is how those changes look in the **key of F**:

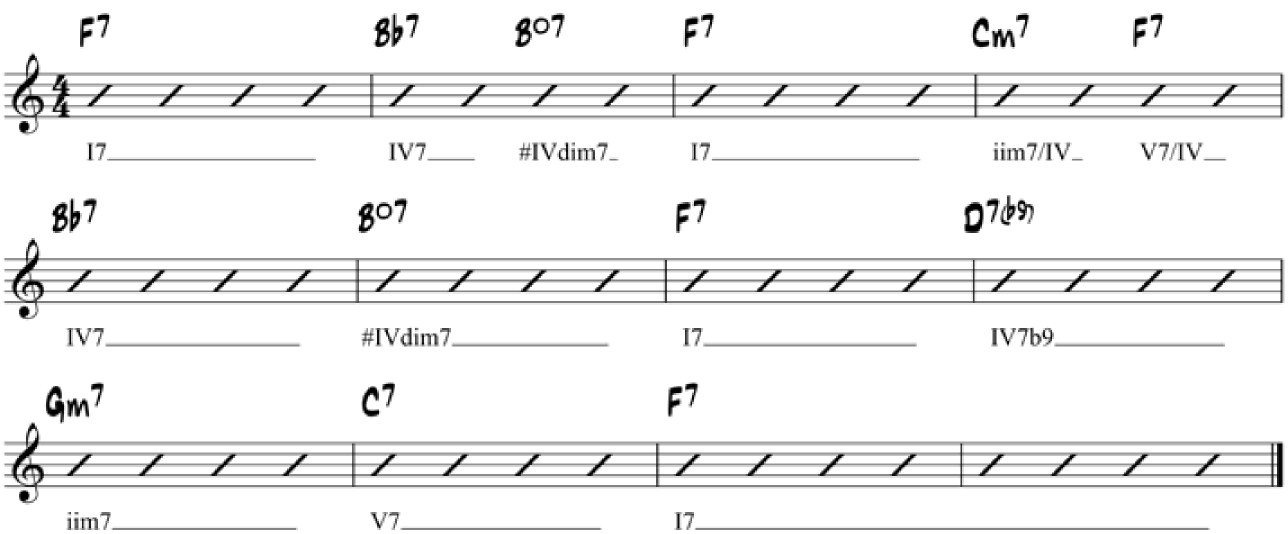
Count Basie Blues Changes			
F7	Bb7 Bdim	F7	Cm7 F7
Bb7	Bdim	F7	D7b9
Gm7	C7	F7	

Notice that the II7 chord from the previous section is now a iim7 chord, constructing a **ii-V progression** in bars 9 and 10 of the blues, another commonly used change in the modern jazz world.

Here is how those changes look on a lead sheet and sound in the audio example to give you a further look into these **fun and commonly used** blues changes.

Audio Example 93

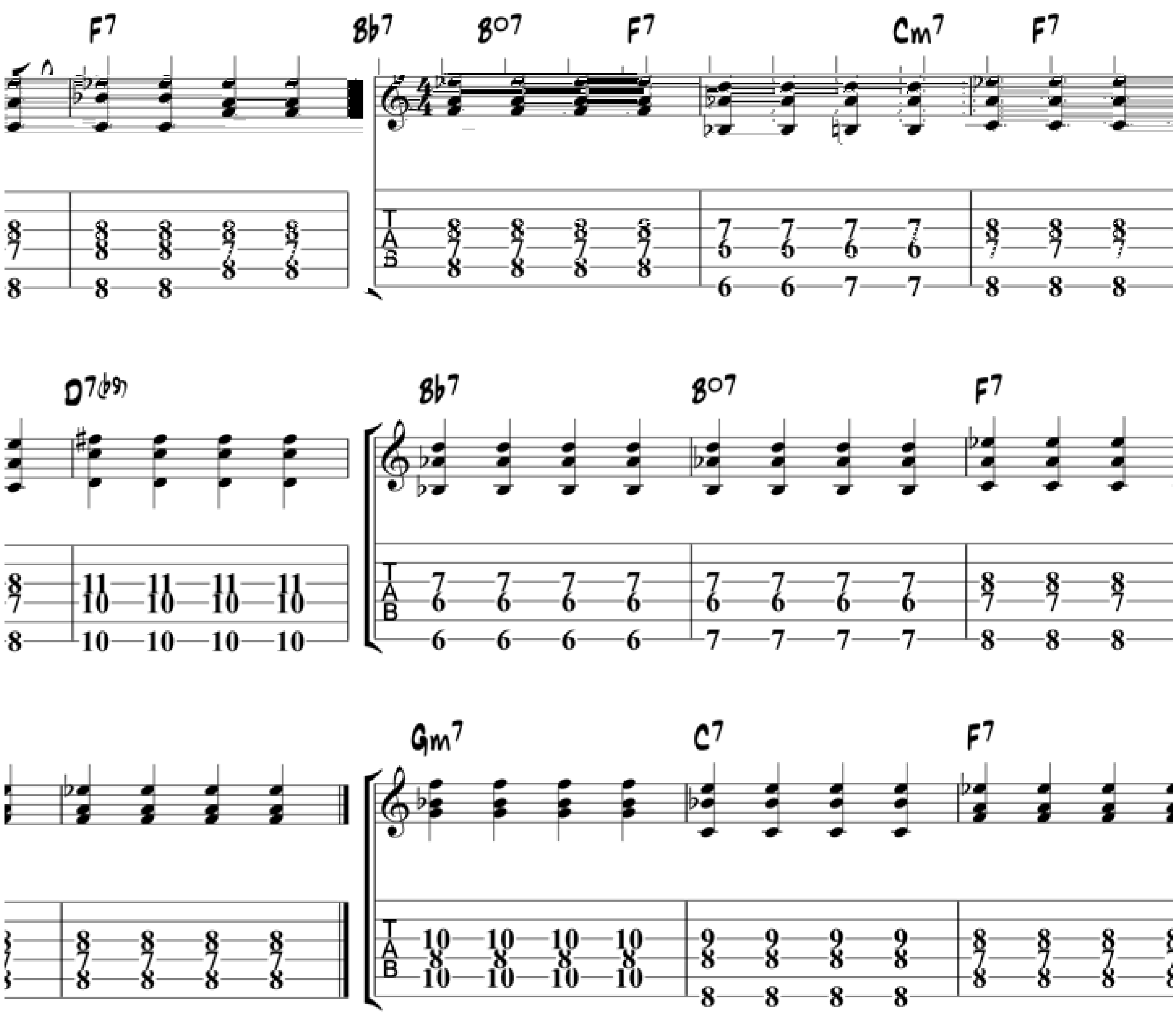
Click here to play audio example 93



To help you take these changes further in your studies, here is a chord study written in the Key of F that uses **Basie blues** chords Try these chords out with the audio below, and then apply them to other jazz blues jams or practice routines.

Audio Example 94

Click here to play audio example 94



Bebop Blues

Getting into the bebop era with these changes, you will notice a ii-V of the iim7 chord in bar 8, as well as a **iii-VI-ii-V progression** in the last bar of the tune, which showcases the bebopper's love of ii-V's and fast moving changes.

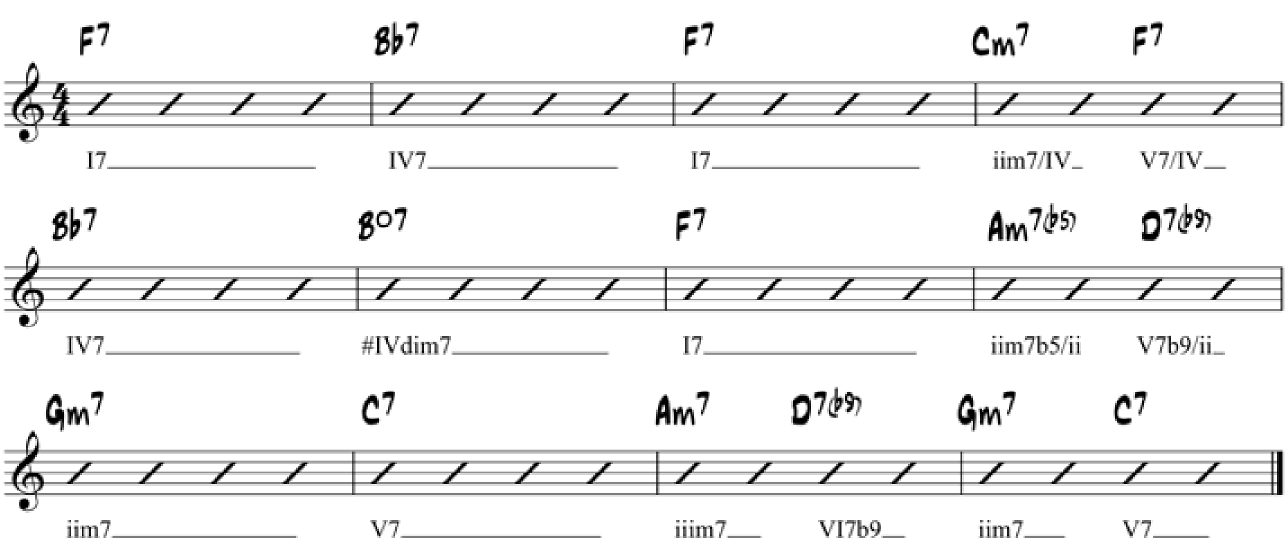
Here is how the **bebop blues** changes look in the key of F:

Bebop Blues Changes			
F7	Bb7	F7	Cm7 F7
Bb7	Bdim	F7	Am7b5 D7b9
Gm7	C7	Am7 D7	Gm7 C7

To get these changes into your ears, here is an audio example and lead sheet for the bebop blues that you can check out, and use to **begin practicing** these important blues changes.

Audio Example 95

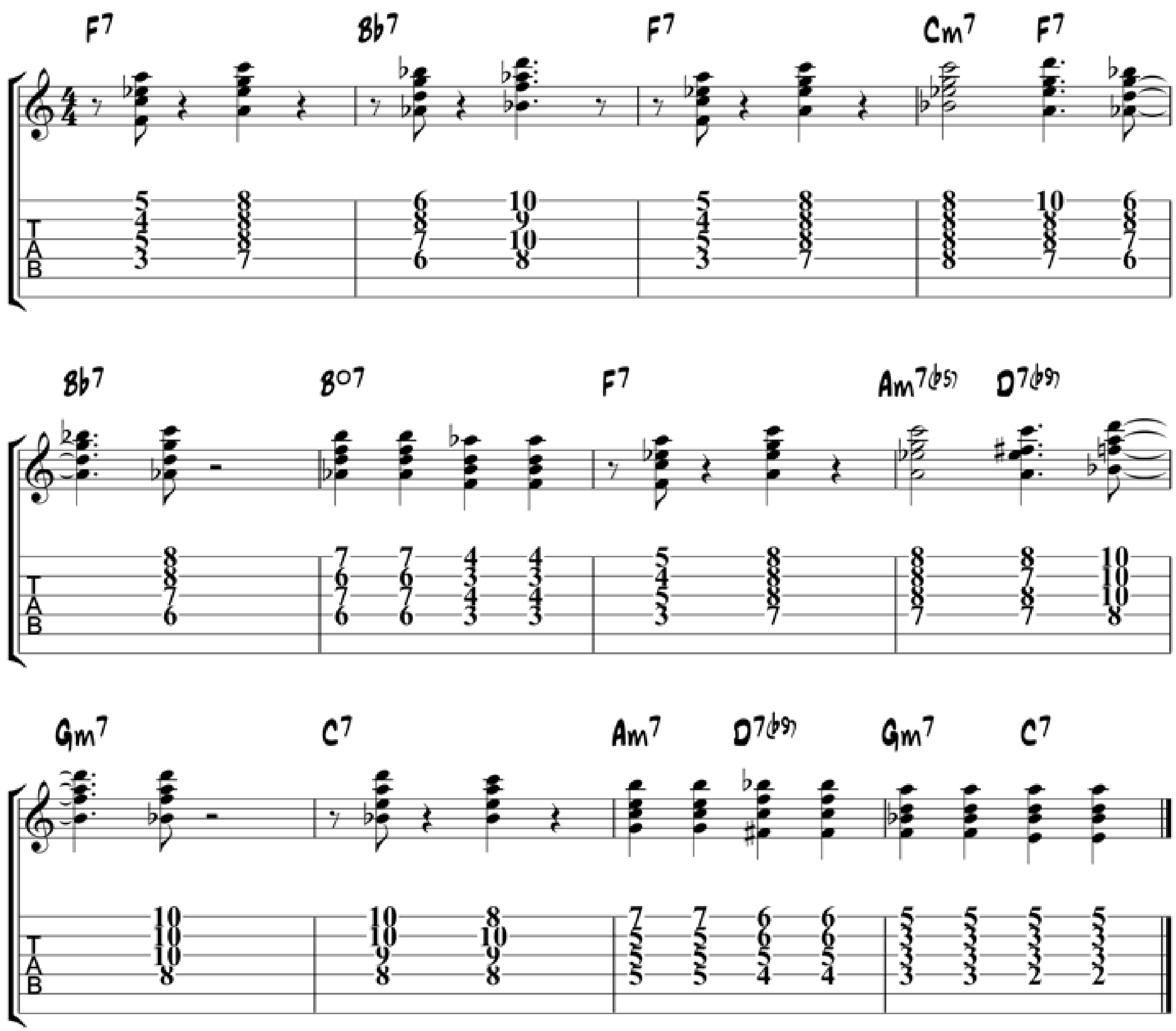
Click here to play audio example 95



You can also learn the following **chord study** in order to begin applying these bebop blues changes to your studies:

Audio Example 96

Click here to play audio example 96



Tritone Substitution Blues

You can also apply tritone substitutions to various bars in the jazz blues progression, as you can see in the following examples:

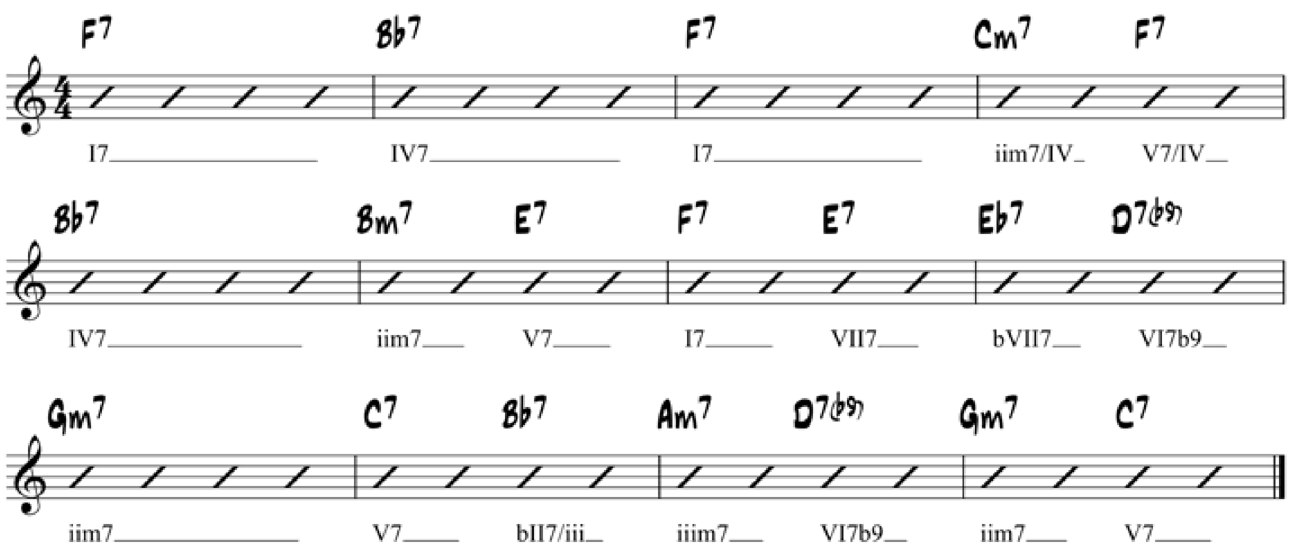
- **Bar 6**: the Bb7 is replaced with a tritone ii-V (Bm7-E7).
- **Bar 6 and 7**: there are four descending 7th chords in bars 7 and 8, with the E7 and Eb7 being used to connect F7 and D7b9 chromatically.
- **Bar 10**: there is a tritone approach chord added to the Am7, Bb7 in place of E7 (the V7 of Am7).

Tritone Sub Blues			
F7	Bb7	F7	Cm7 F7
Bb7	Bm7 E7	F7 E7	Eb7 D7b9
Gm7	C7 Bb7	Am7 D7	Gm7 C7

To get this chord substitution under your fingers and into your ears, here is a lead sheet and audio example for the **Blues in F** using the tritone subs and chromatic 7th chords mentioned above.

Audio Example 97

Click here to play audio example 97
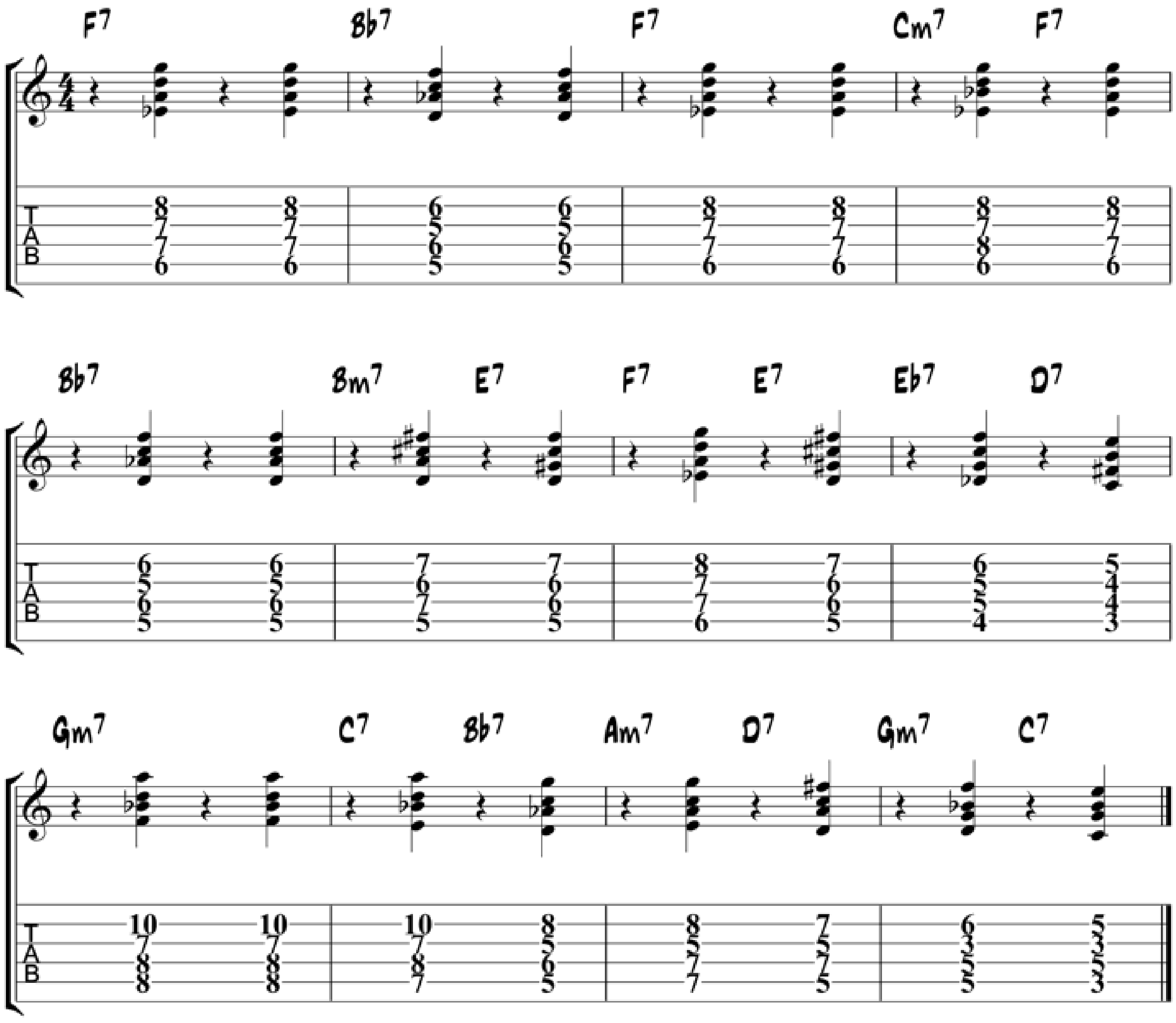


Next is as one-chorus chord study you can learn to take these changes directly to your playing in a **jazz blues context**.

To help hear the effect the tritone subs have on a blues progression**,** try playing the previous bebop blues changes once, the chord study if you can, followed by this chord study. Often times **hearing the difference** between chord progressions will be the key element when learning a new jazz blues chord progression.

Audio Example 98

Click here to play audio example 98



Bird Blues

The last blues progression we'll look into is named after Charlie Parker, called Bird blues, and is found in one of most famous compositions **Blues for Alice**.

Reflecting the bebop love of ii-V's, this progression is full of various ii-V progressions in a number of different keys.

> A Bird blues starts and ends with an Fmaj7 chord, which is odd for a blues progression.

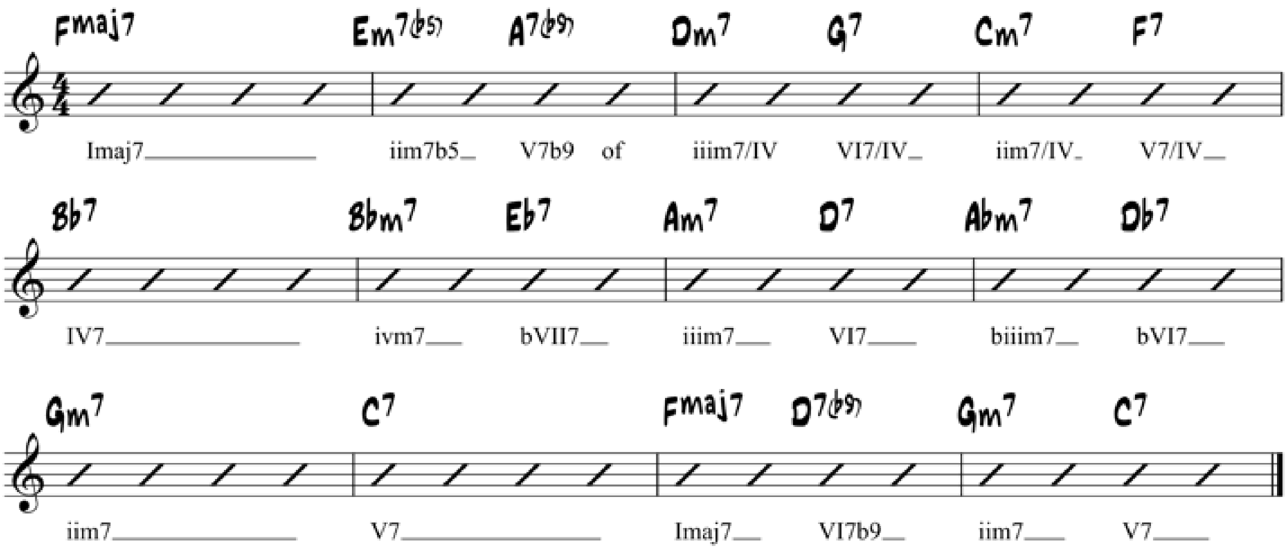
Here is how those changes look in the **key of F**:

Bird Blues Changes			
Fmaj7	Em7b5 A7b9	Dm7 G7	Cm7 F7
Bb7	Bbm7 Eb7	Am7 D7	Abm7 Db7
Gm7	C7	F D7	Gm7 C7

To get these changes into your ears, and understand how they look on paper, here is an audio example and lead sheet for **Bird Blues in F**.

Audio Example 99

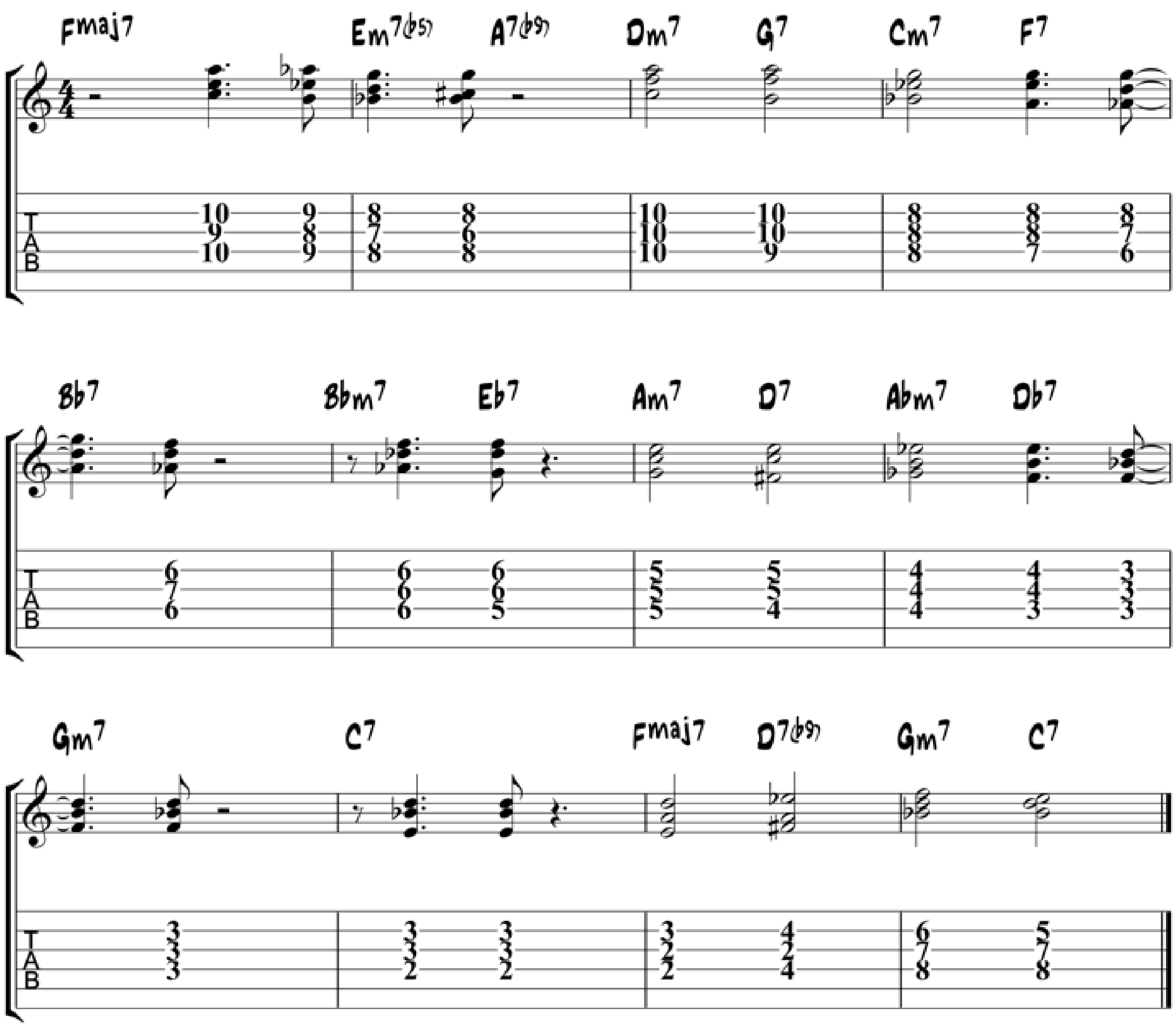
Click here to play audio example 99



Here is a chord study written out over a **Bird blues in F** that you can use to get these changes under your fingers:

Audio Example 100

Click here to play audio example 100

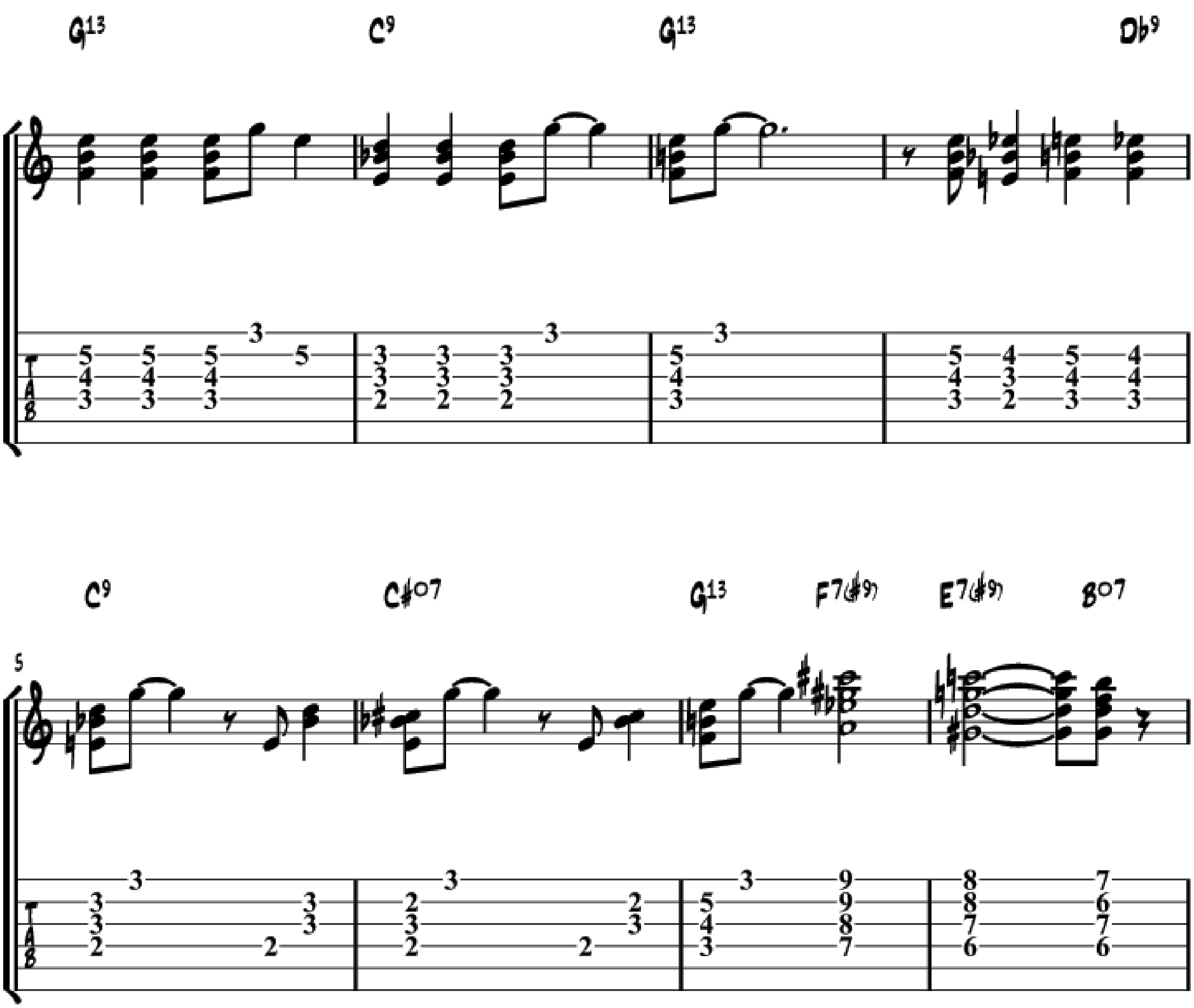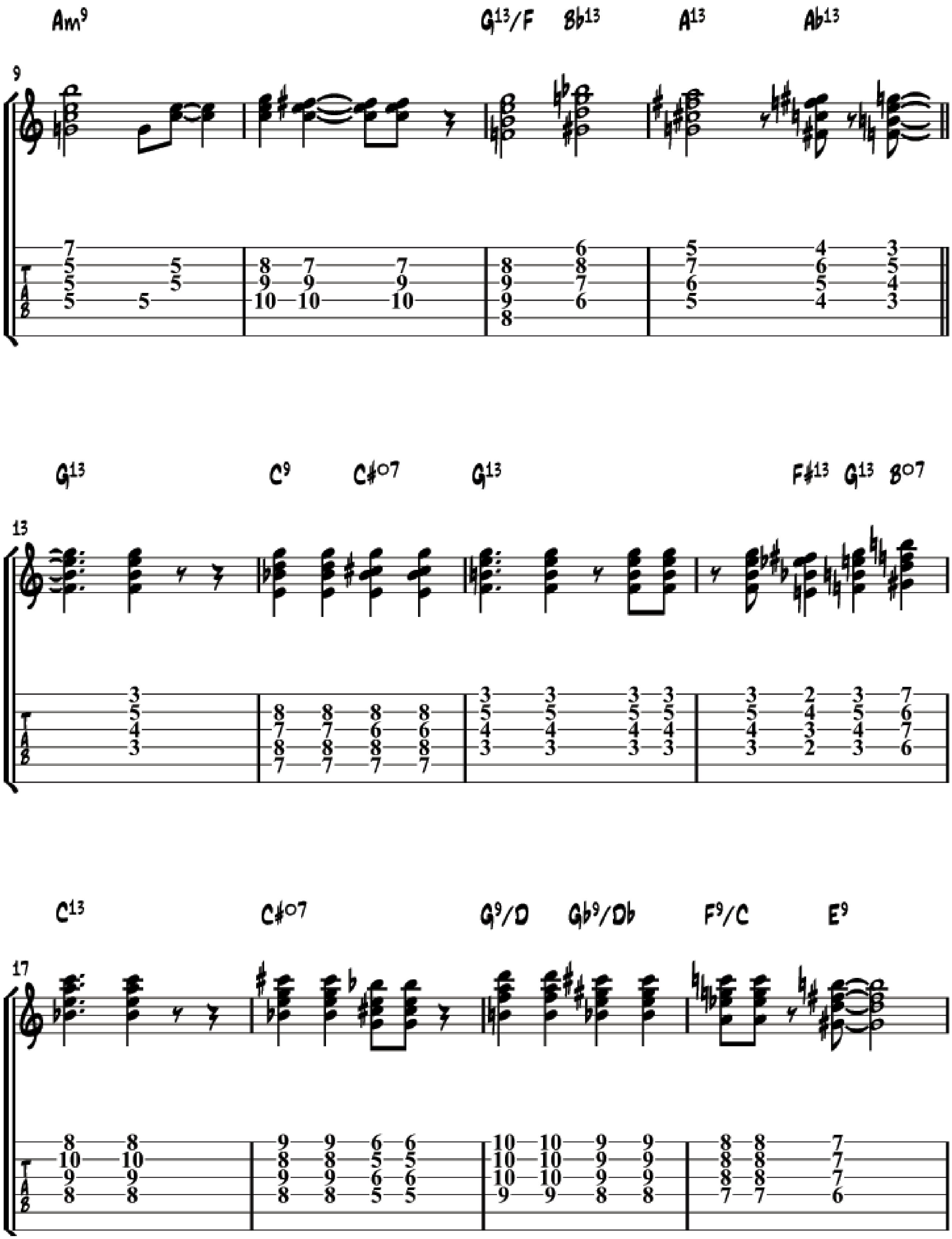


Jazz Blues - Comping Exercise for a Blues in G
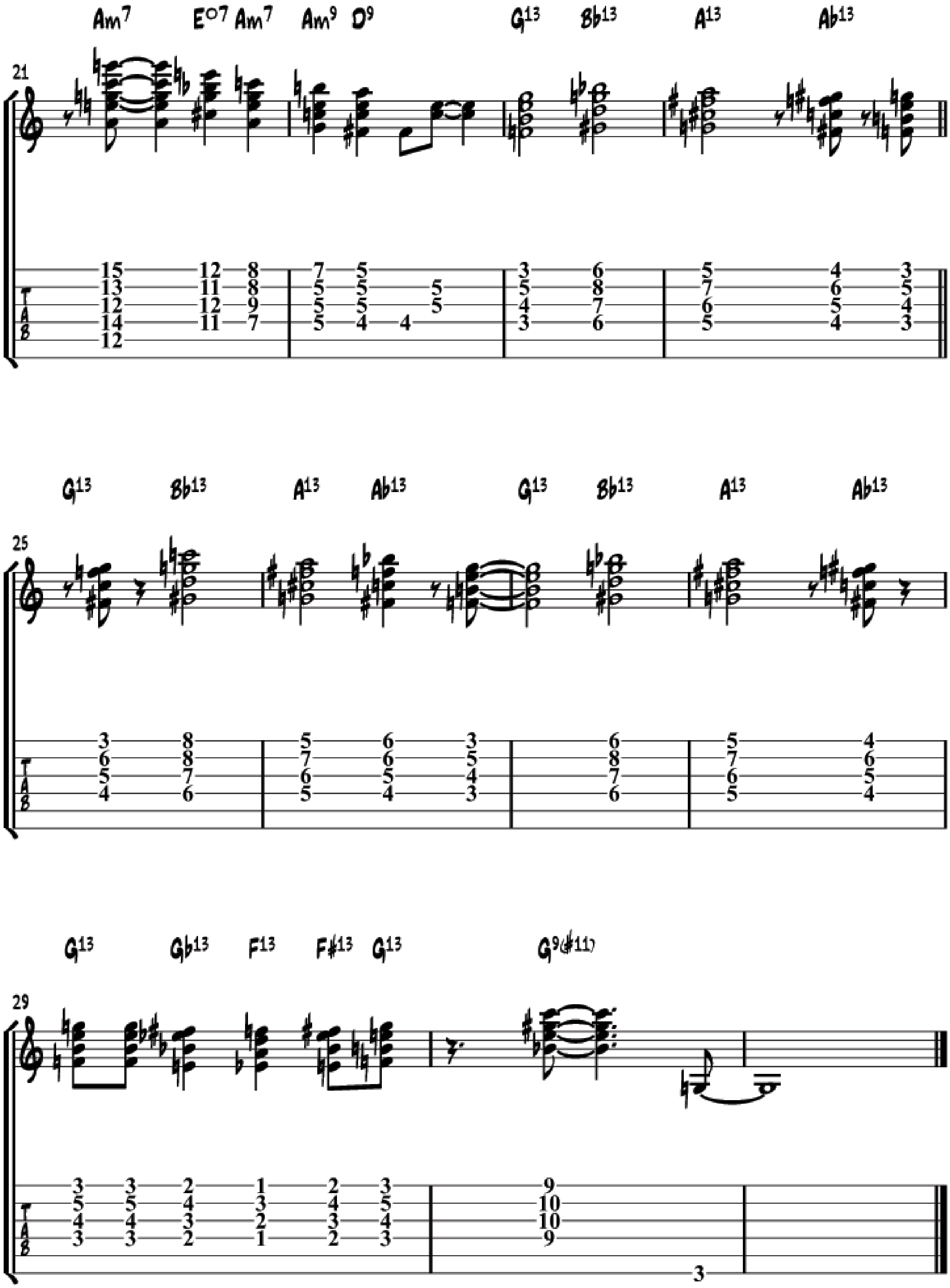
The next comping study adds some more variation and embellishments to your blues comping.

Audio Example 101

Click here to play audio example 101




Am9
G13/F
Bb13
A13
Ab13
9
G13
C9
C#o7
G13
F#13
G13
Bo7
13
C13
C#o7
G9/D
Gb9/Db
F9/C
E9
17


Am7 E°7 Am7 Am9 D9 G13 Bb13 A13 Ab13
21
G13 Bb13 A13 Ab13 G13 Bb13 A13 Ab13
25
G13 Gb13 F13 F#13 G13 G9(#11)
29

Here's a backing track you can use to practice:

Backing Track 10

Click here to play backing track 10

The chords are pretty straighforward, some remarks though:

- Bar 5-6: there's some contrary motion going on here. The bass goes from c to c# (upward motion), while the d of C9 goes to the c# (downward motion) of C#°7. Contrary motion in voice leading sounds nice.
- Bar 8: B°7 is the same chord as E7(b9), so the voice leading goes from #9 to b9 to the 5 of Am7.
- Bar 10: Sus chords are a nice way to delay and bring extra motion to dominant chords.
- Bar 11: G13/F is the 3rd inversion of G13, a very useful voicing.
- Bar 11-12: the first 3 chords are on the beat, while the last 2 chords are off the beat. This brings a feeling of forward motion to the comping.
- Bar 14: this is a common Em7b5 voicing (=C9), followed by a E°7 (=C#°7).
- Bar 16: some chromatic slides going on here.
- Bar 21-22: a Wes Montgomery style chord lick.
- Bar 25: the turnaround is repeated twice as a coda.
- Bar 30: the bass note g is played by tapping the note on the fret board with the index finger of the right hand.

To learn how to comp over a jazz blues, check out our eBooks Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 1 & 2

Jazz Blues - Wes Montgomery Blues Solo

Next you will learn to play a jazz guitar solo in the style of Wes Montgomery. The solo is over a **jazz blues in F** and is full of classic Wes licks and ideas that you can apply to your own playing.

Here's the video:



Audio only:

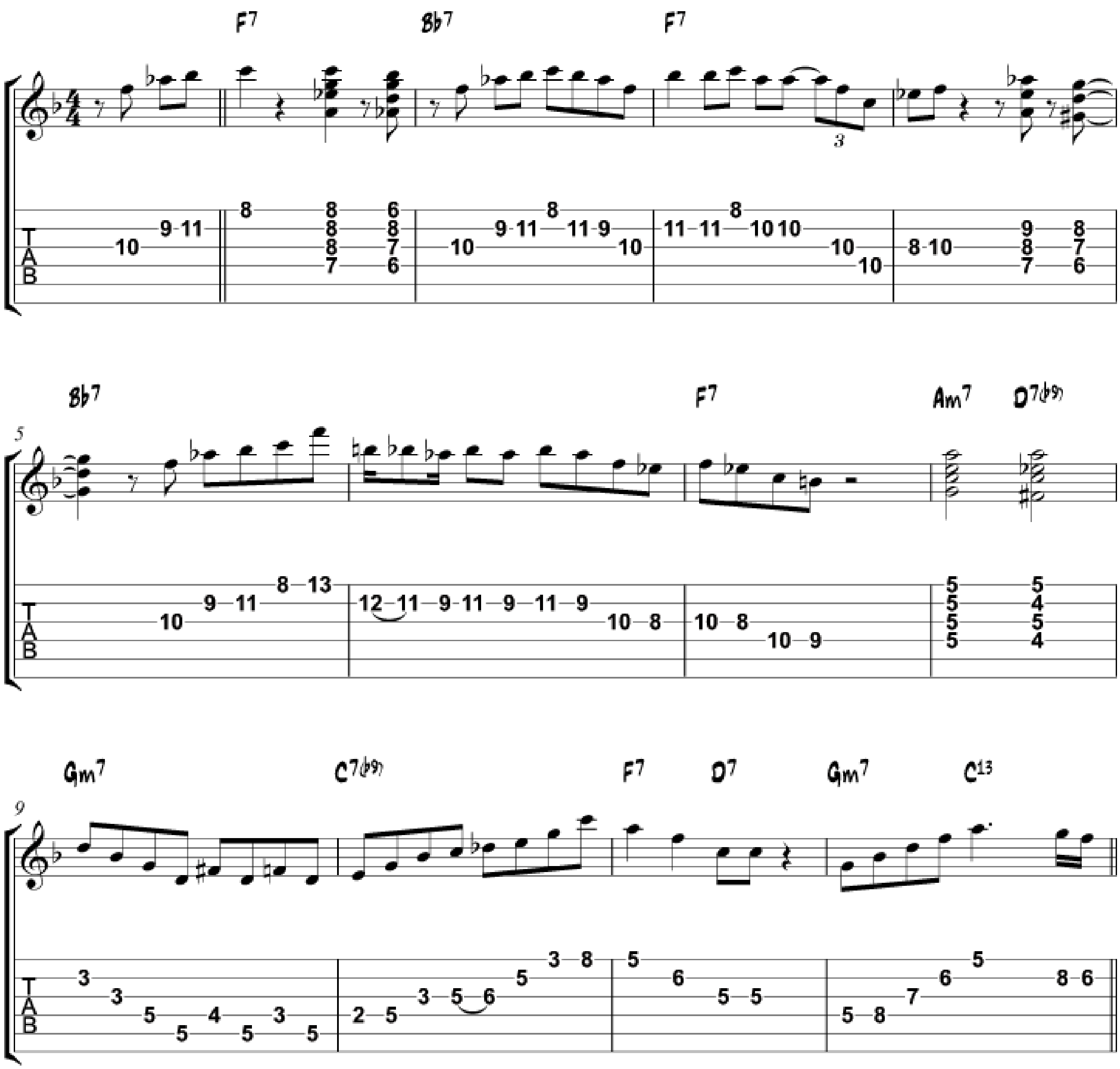
Audio Example 102
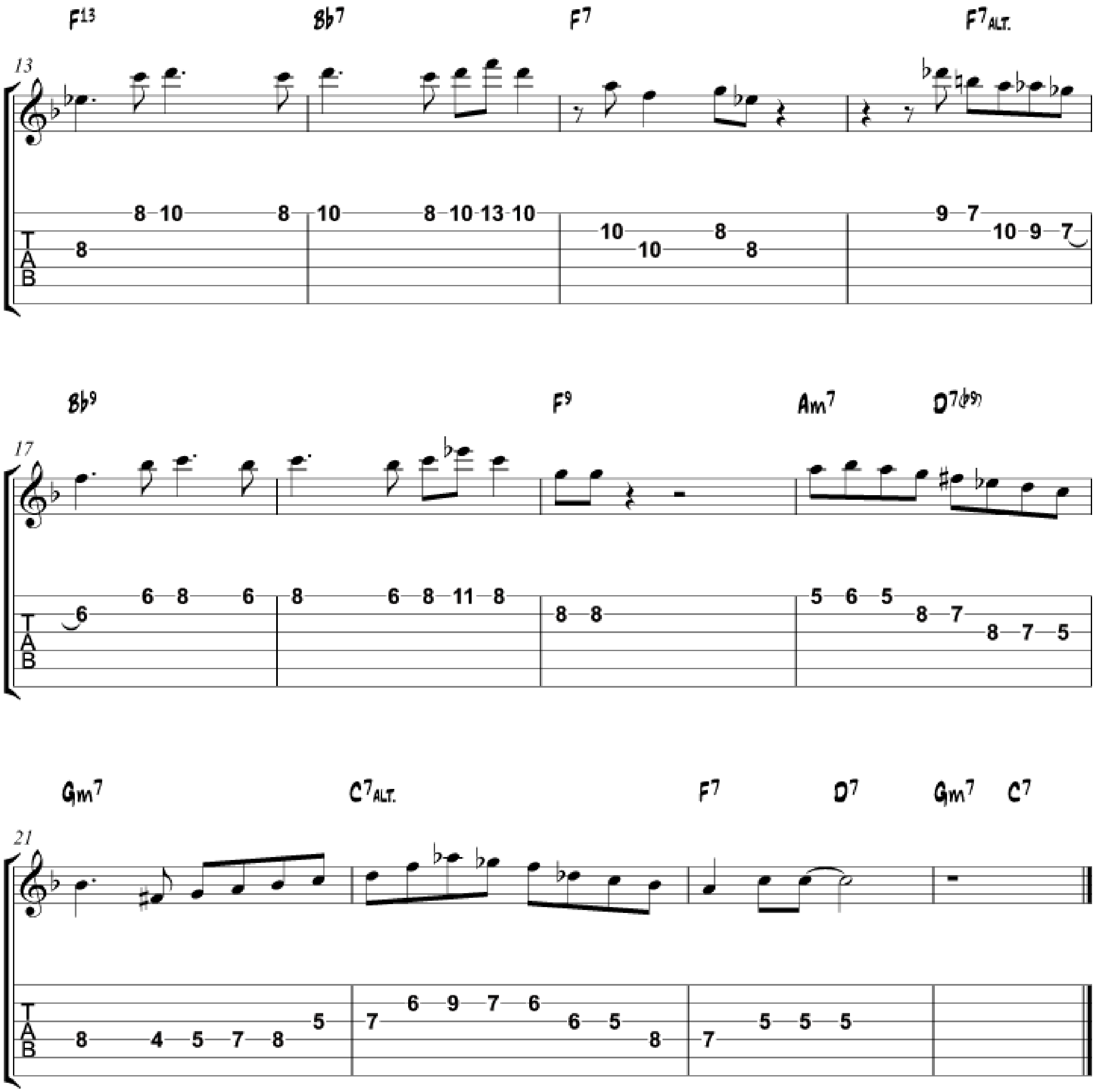
Click here to play audio example 102

The music notation and backing track:

Backing Track 11

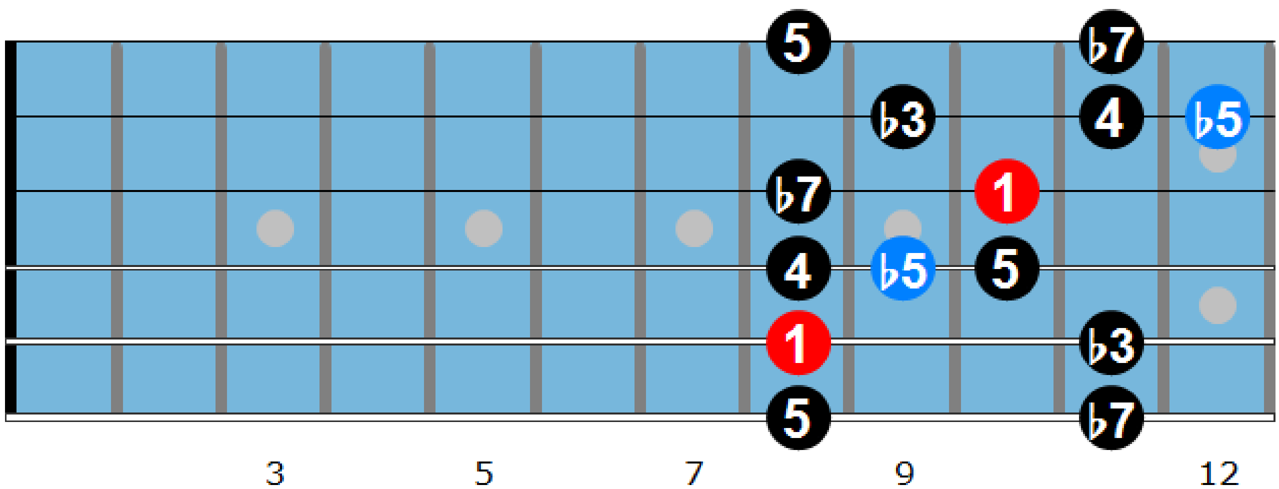
Click here to play backing track 11



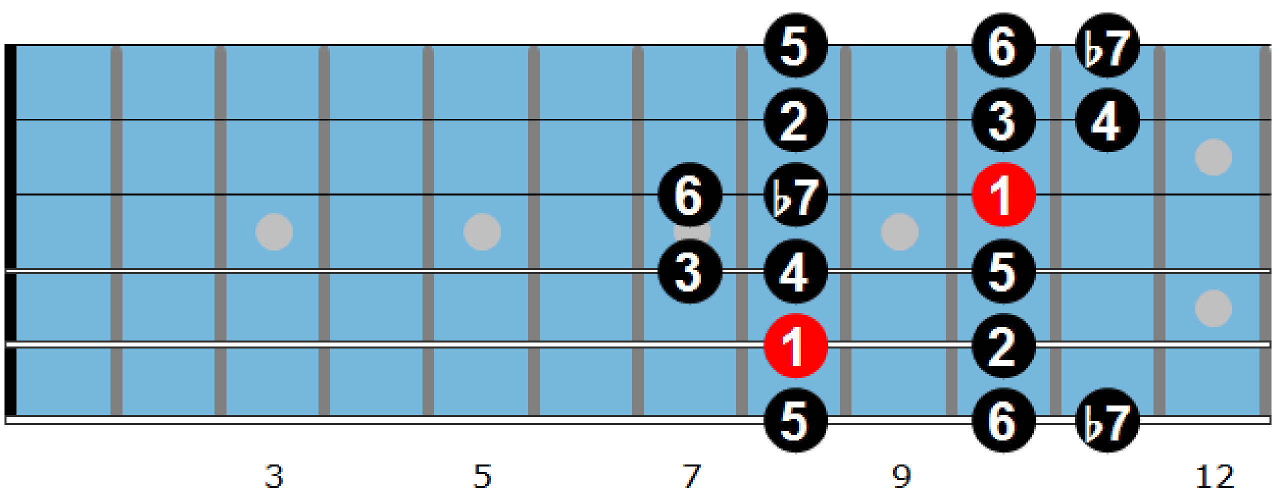

F13 Bb7 F7 F7ALT.
13
Bb9 F9 Am7 D7(b9)
17
Gm7 C7ALT. F7 D7 Gm7 C7
21

The first 8 bars use the F minor pentatonic scale, mixed with the major 3rd (bar 3). Mixing b3 and 3 is often used by jazz musicians to create a bluesy sound. One way to do this is mixing the F minor blues scale with the F Mixolydian scale. The **blue colored notes** in the F minor blues scale are "blue notes" (used in bar 6).

F Minor Blues Scale

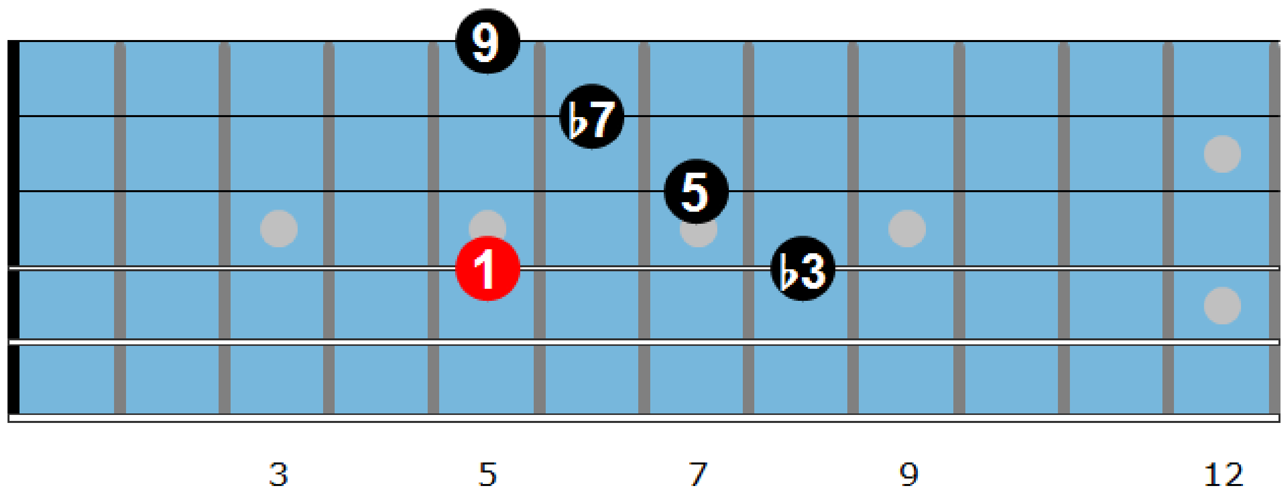


F Mixolydian Scale



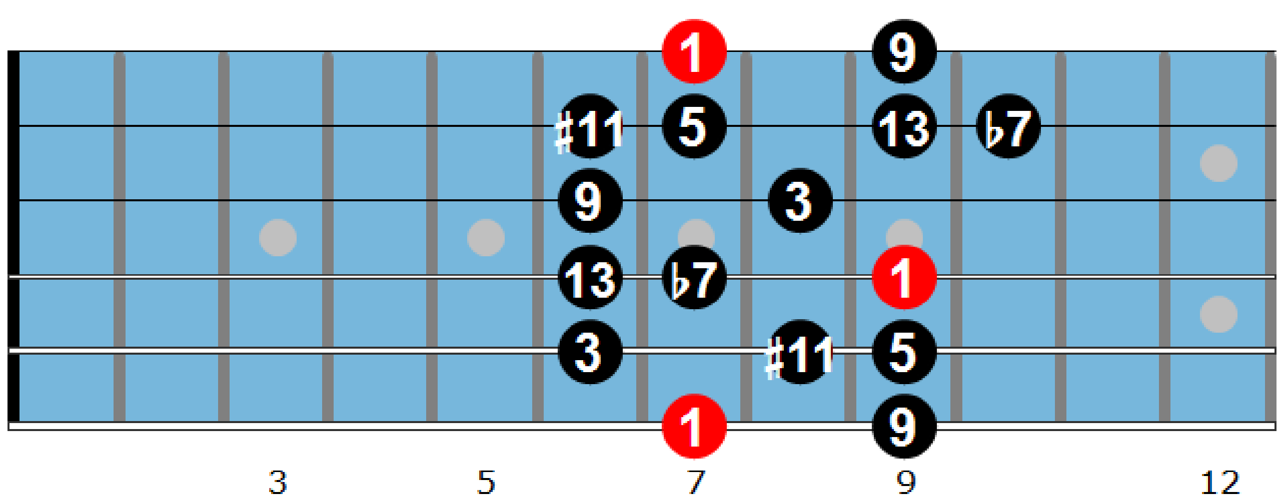
In bar 12, a Gm9 arpeggio is used. You could also use a Bbmaj7 arpeggio to achieve the same sound:

G Minor 9 Arpeggio



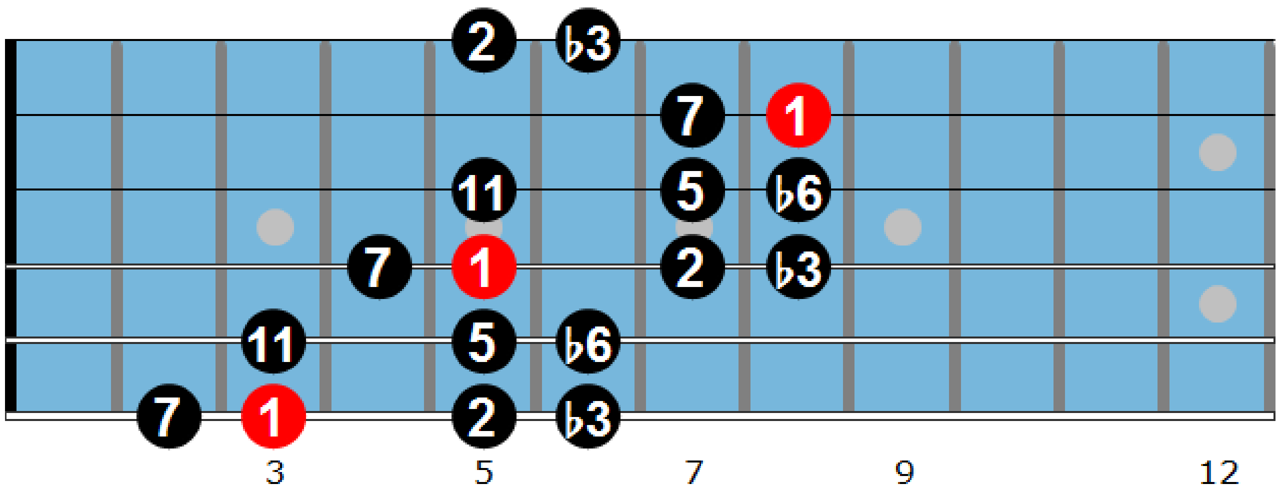
Bar 16 uses the B Lydian Dominant scale (= F Altered scale). B7 is the tritone substitute of F7 and creates an altered sound over F.

B Lydian Dominant Scale



The classic lick in bar 20 uses the G Harmonic Minor scale over D7, creating a 7b9 sound:

G Harmonic Minor Scale



If you want to learn more about how to apply Wes Montgomery's style to your own playing, check out our ebook How to Play in the Style of Wes Montgomery

Jazz Blues - Kenny Burrell Minor Blues Solo

In this section you'll be playing a Kenny Burrell inspired solo over a **minor blues**. The blues forms we looked at until now are all of the major kind. As the name implies, minor blues forms are in the minor key and have a different chord progression compared to the major blues. The details of the minor blues are beyond the scope of this eBook. To learn all the fine details of the minor blues, check out our eBook Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 2.

One of the albums that many guitarists check out when first exploring the jazz genre is Kenny Burrell's *Midnight Blue* record. As well, since it was covered by **Stevie Ray Vaughan**, a lot of players are drawn to the classic tune "Chitlins Con Carne."

When learning **how to play in the style of Kenny Burrell**, especially like a tune such as Chitlins, one of the key elements to explore is mixing chords and single-lines during each phrase of an improvised chorus, which you can hear during the melody section of Chitlins especially.

To help you get that cool-sounding Kenny Burrell chord/single-note sound in your jazz guitar soloing ideas, this lesson will explore a sample solo written out of an **A minor blues chord progression** that is inspired by Kenny's playing on *Midnight Blue* and "Chitlins Con Carne."

The single notes in the solo are all based on the **A minor blues scale**, and the chords used are typical, three-note shapes that many jazz guitarists use in this type of soloing/comping situation, including Kenny.

So, grab your axe and let's dig into some smooth sounding cool jazz in the style of Kenny Burrell.

Kenny Burrell Minor Blues Backing Track

Here is a short backing track that you can use to practice the solo in this lesson, as well as work on improvising over the minor blues chord progression in the woodshed.

Backing Track 12

Click here to play backing track 12

Practicing This Solo

Learning a solo from memory is a great way to digest the material in that improvisation, but there are also other exercises that you can use to continue your study of this material. Here are **3 ways** that you can continue your study of this Kenny Burrell Minor Blues Solo:
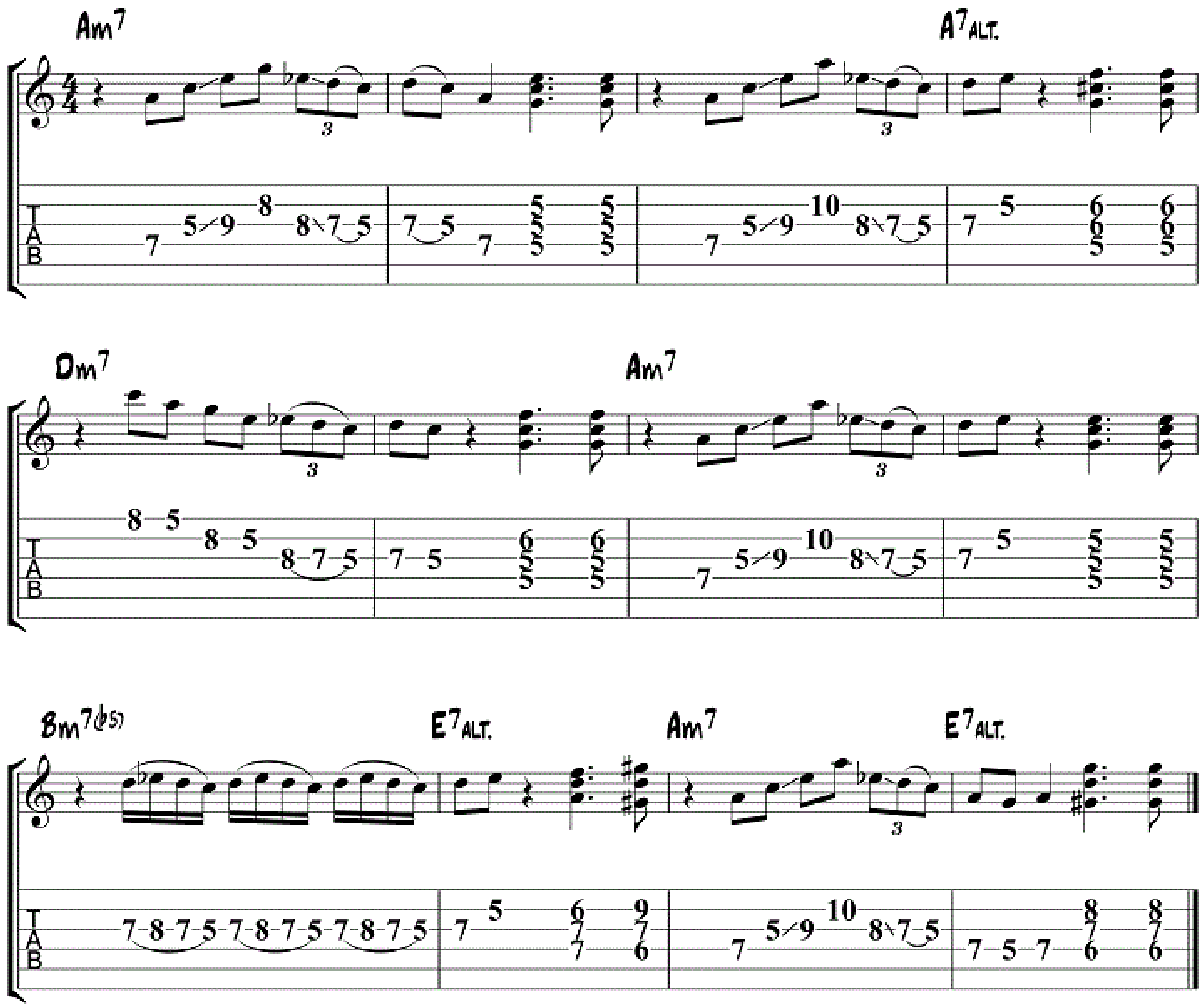
1. Play the solo with a backing track over the first chorus. During the second chorus you improvise the single lines but keep the chords as is. Continue this alteration throughout the backing track.

2. Write out your own Kenny Burrell inspired solo over an A minor blues progression, using the blues scale for the single notes, and small, three-note chords for the comping sections of the solo.

3. Practice singing an improvised single-line where you see the single-notes in the solo above, then comp the chords on the guitar where they land. This is a great way to connect your ears and voice to your fretboard while working on a minor blues at the same time.

Audio Example 103

Click here to play audio example 103
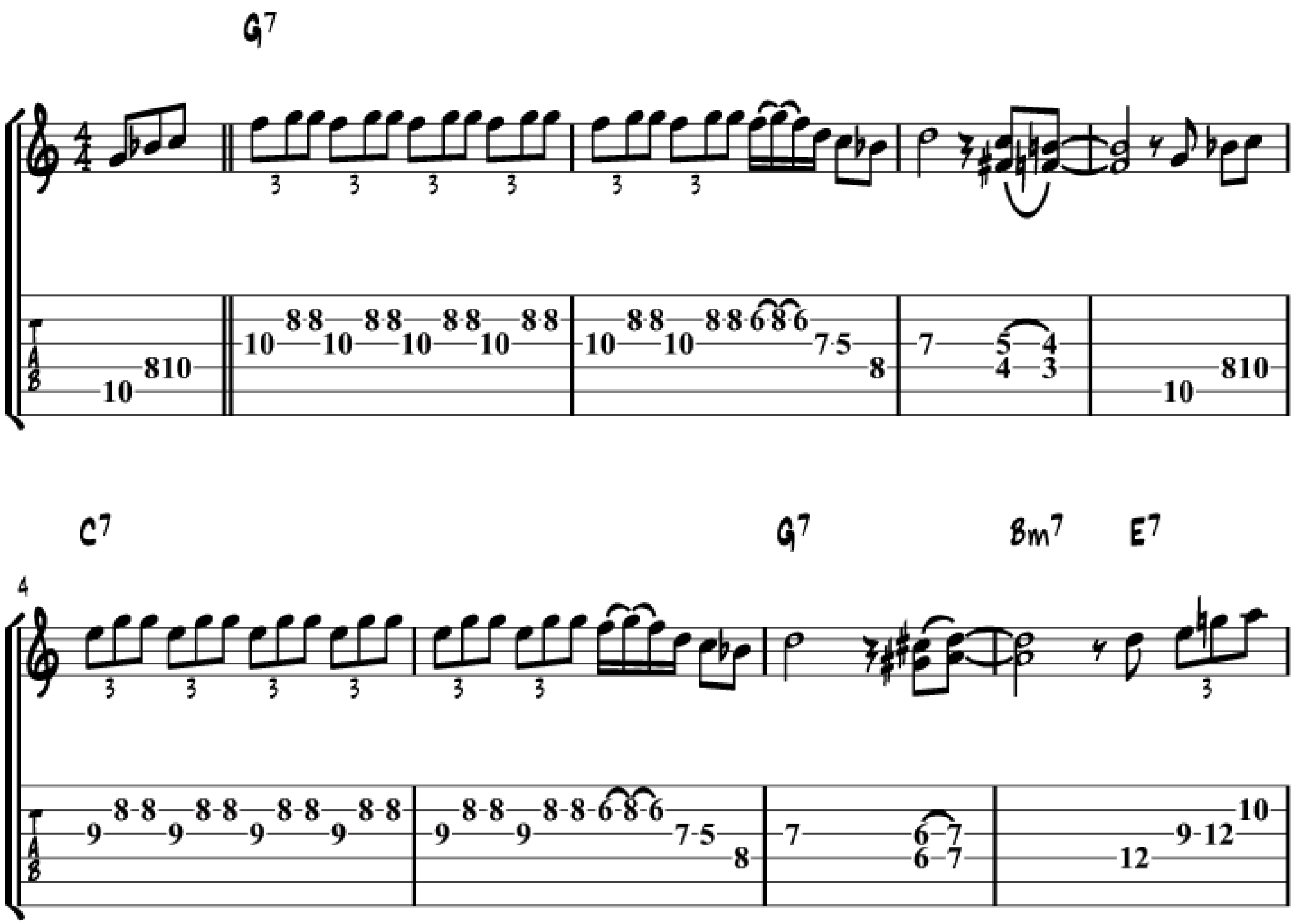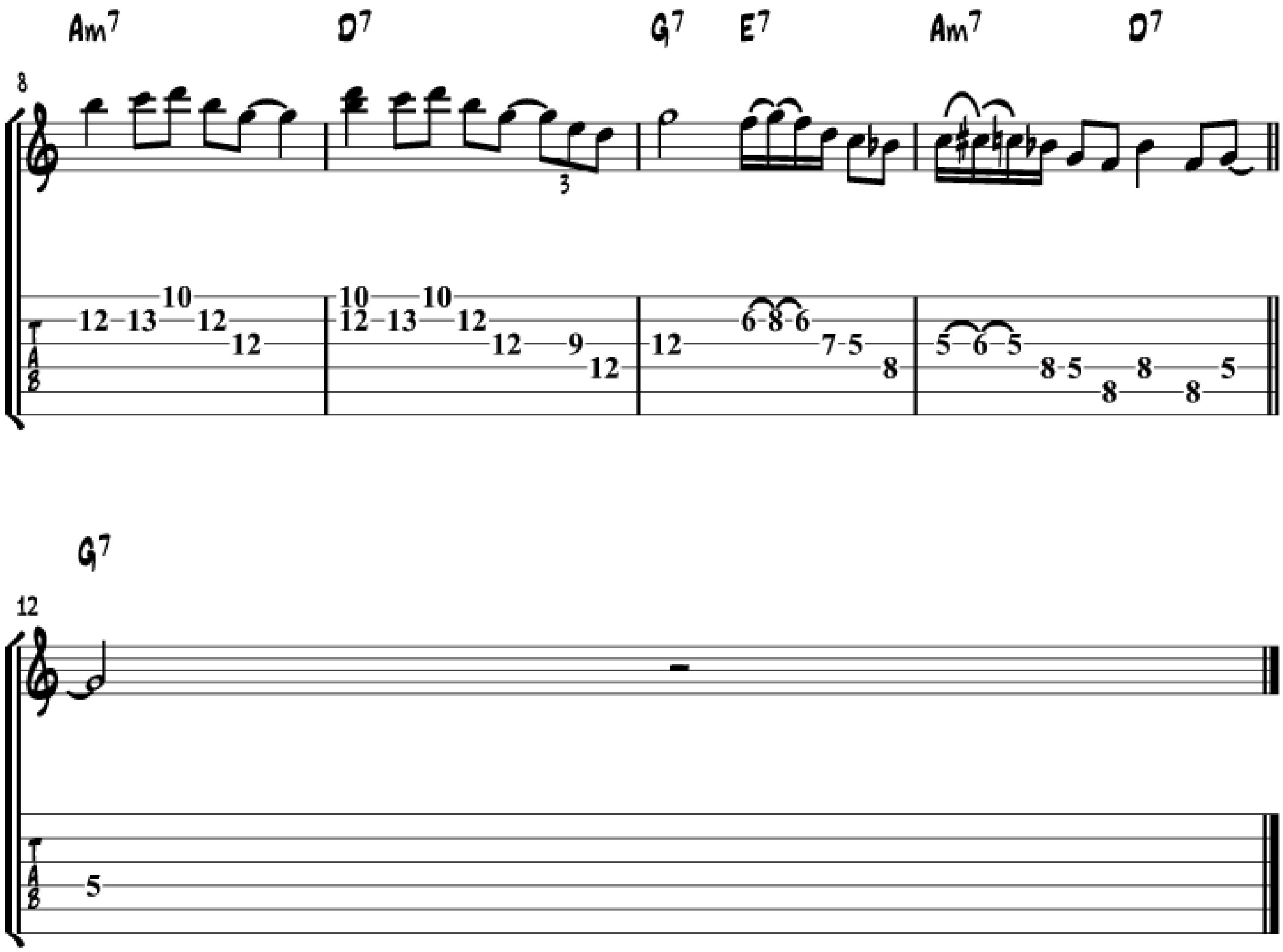


Jazz Blues - Joe Pass

Here is another example of a jazz blues solo (over a blues in G), this time in the style of Joe Pass. In this example he mixes the minor and major pentatonic scales.

Audio Example 104

Click here to play audio example 104





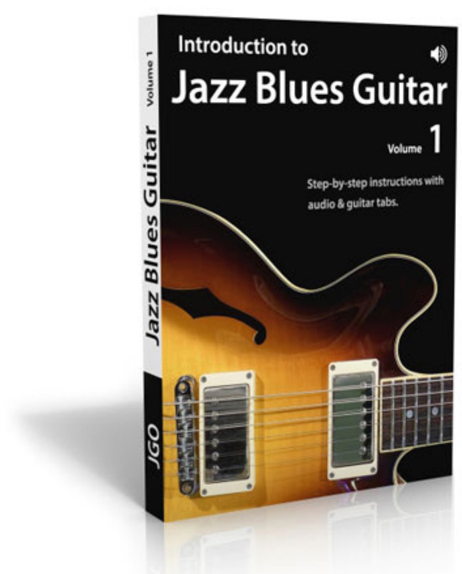
Backing Track 13

Click here to play backing track 13

Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 1 & 2

With the Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 1 and 2 eBooks, you get everything you need to take you from day 1 of jazz blues study all the way to an advanced level of performance.

If you want to take your jazz blues comping and soloing to the next level, or just raise your overall jazz guitar game, then these two eBooks are just what you need: Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 1 & 2.





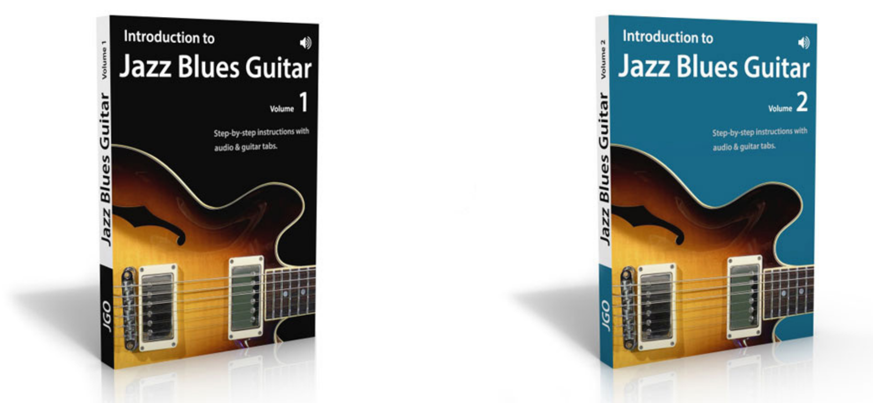
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jack fairbanks

> Anyone familiar with the present cost of guitar lessons will appreciate the wide swath of coverage offered in these two volumes. The material offers vast time-saving techniques for learning. Pick up the important stuff, like which notes to leave out of extended chords, why arpeggios are so important for learning the fretboard, etc. etc. Well worth the price of admission, and presented clearly, with few ambiguities. You need only the most basic knowledge of theory to really capitalize on the progression from simple ideas to fairly esoteric nuance. Highly recommended !

Click Here to download your copy of *Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar*.



Appendix

The Roman Numeral System

When talking about chord function in jazz we use Roman Numerals to label each chord in a given key. We do this to differentiate chord numbers from scale numbers (which are written with Arabic numerals such as 1, 2 and 3).

The symbols used are from I to VII. Here is an how all of the Roman Numerals for the chords in a major scale would be written:

C Major Diatonic Chords	Cmaj7	Dm7	Em7	Fmaj7	G7	Am7	Bm7b5
Roman Notation	Imaj7	iim7	iiim7	IVmaj7	V7	vim7	viim7b5

- **Capital Roman Numerals** (Imaj7, IVmaj7, V7): are used to indicate Major and Dominant chords.
- **Small Roman Numerals** (iim7, iiim7, vim7, viim7b5): are used to indicate Minor and Diminished/Half-Diminished chords.

The good thing about the Roman numeral system is that we can talk and write about chord progressions,**regardless of any key**. We can talk for example about a I vi ii V:

Roman Numerals	Imaj7	vim7	iim7	V7
In C Major	Cmaj7	Am7	Dm7	G7
In G Major	Gmaj7	Em7	Am7	D7

If the chord appears **outside of the basic key center** (a tritone substitution for example) b's and #'s are used to indicate these chords.

Here is how a tritone sub 2 5 chord progression would look like in Roman Numerals:

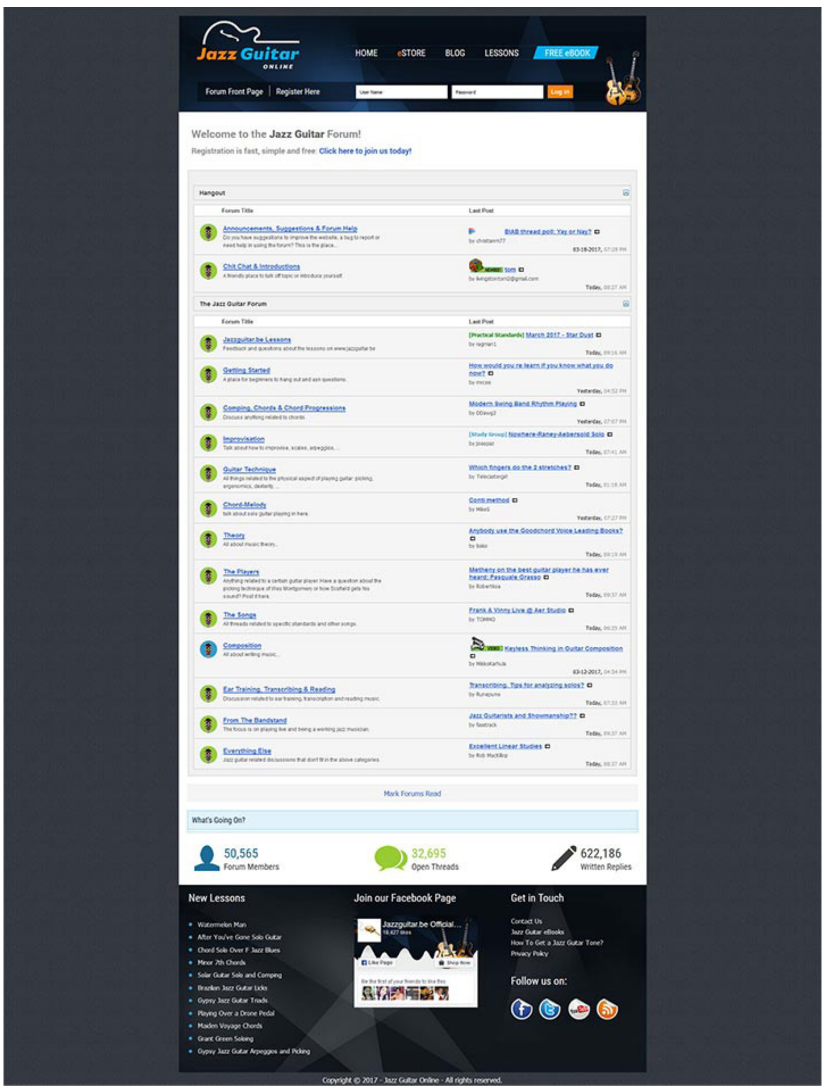
In C Major	Dm7	Db7	Cmaj7
Roman Notation	iim7	bII7	I maj7

Click here to return to Your First Jazz Progression

Further Resources

The Jazz Guitar Online Forum: the JGO forum is the place where you can get your jazz guitar related questions answered and engage in friendly discussion. At the time of writing there are 50,565 members, with over 622,000 replies.

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The Jazz Guitar Blog: the JGO blog is the place where we publish our new lessons (usually on a weekly basis).

Here's a **top 15** of the most popular posts:

1. Popular Jazz Guitars
2. Popular Jazz Guitar Amps
3. Playing Chord Melody Jazz Guitar
4. Bluesy Melody: Full Count (Chuck D'Aloia)
5. 5 Jazzy Pentatonic Scale Patterns
6. Georgia on my Mind Guitar Chords
7. Summertime Guitar Chord Study
8. Misty Comping Study
9. 5 Essential ii V I Jazz Guitar Licks
10. Shell Jazz Guitar Chords (For Beginners)
11. Take The A Train Chord Study
12. Gypsy Jazz Guitar - Rhythm & Chord Progressions
13. Gypsy Jazz Guitar - Introduction to Arpeggios & Picking
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1. Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 1
2. Introduction to Jazz Blues Guitar Volume 2
3. The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Arpeggios
4. The Easy Guide to Jazz Guitar Chords
5. The Easy Guide to Chord Melody
6. How to Play in the Style of Wes Montgomery
7. How to Play in the Style of Charlie Christian
8. Anatomy of a Lick - Essential Jazz Guitar Lines
9. 30 Days to Better Jazz Guitar
10. The Jazz Guitar Practice Guide
11. Modern Time - Guide to Jazz Guitar Rhythm
12. Jazz Guitar Premium Volume 1 (10 Lessons)
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